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September 2000

Issue 12

dreamcast

128-BIT TECHNOLOGY

ONLINE GAMING

MONTHLY

Those crazy kids are back!

**exclusive
first look**

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Evil Dead: Hail to the King
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VIRTUA TENNIS

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**exclusive
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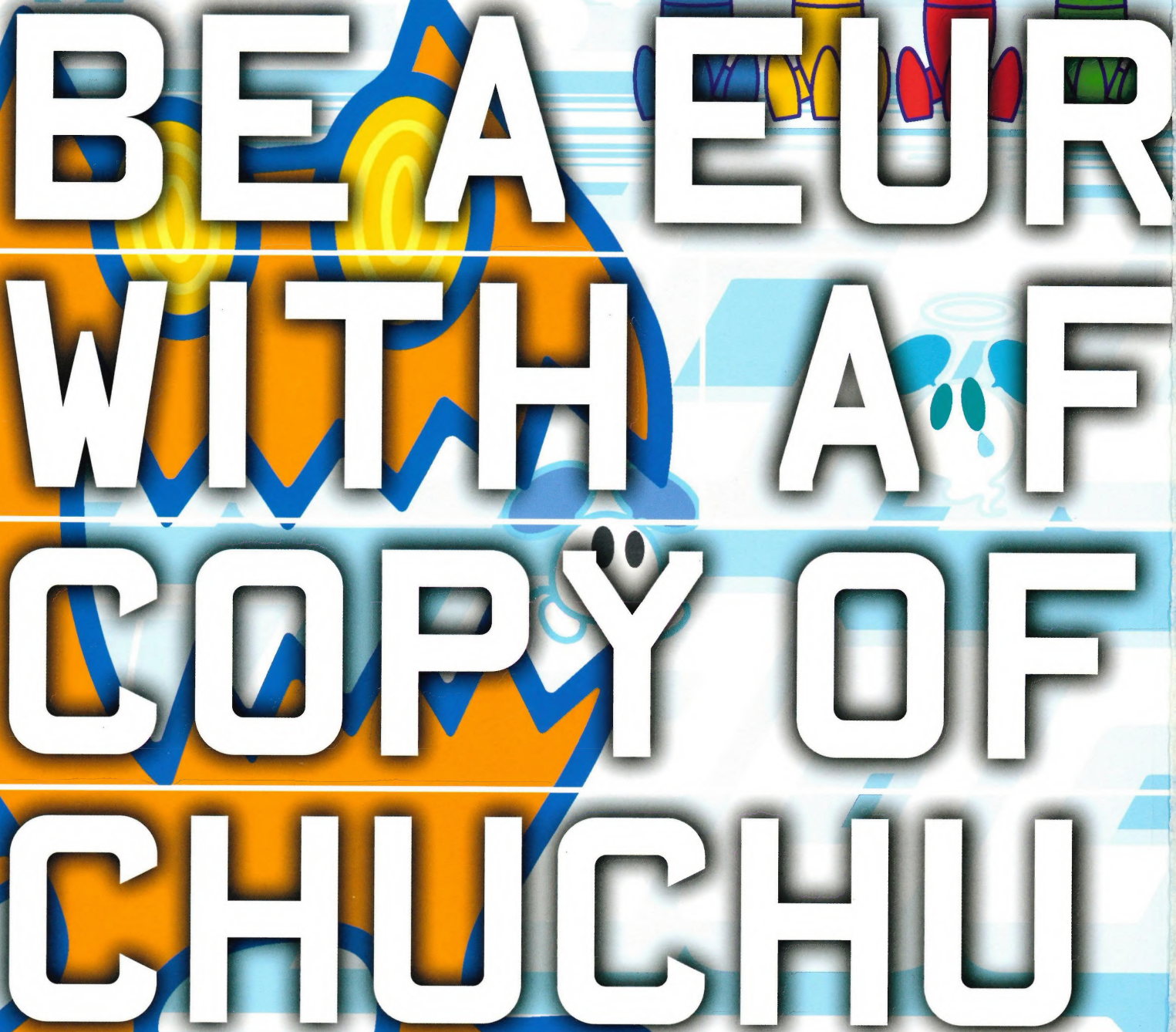
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BEAT EUROPE WITH A COPY OF CHUCHU

Now, for the first time ever, you can take on the rest of Europe, head to head and in real time, through your Dreamcast console. What's more you can do it for free with ChuChu Rocket!, Europe's first ever online console game. We're giving it away to anyone who buys a new Dreamcast, and to all existing Dreamcast owners who go on line through their consoles to Dreamarena, Dreamcast's exclusive website. And, once you've got your free ChuChu Rocket!, from June 9th you can enter the European ChuChu Challenge by visiting Dreamarena. Don't miss out, it's your chance to be the star of Europe.

O STAR REE



ROCKET!

SEGA



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| editorial |

Whether you consider it a sad truth or a stroke of genius, sex sells videogames. In a total act of fluke (and no mistaking!), this month's selection of the latest Dreamcast games is inadvertent proof of this fact. Red-blooded males across the country should prepare to meet Ulala, the fictitious and delicious star of Space Channel 5, Sega's new music and dance game (previewed on Page 32). Her saucy moves and selection of skimpy outfits are sure to raise the temperature, while the awesome soundtrack and near-faultless playability should ensure blockbuster success when the game's released a little closer to Christmas.

If Ulala's hip-swinging and bottom-wiggling doesn't bake your biscuit, there's plenty more fish in the sea of software on offer this month. What better than our cover-featured game, Power Stone 2, to get the ball rolling? The original may have been acclaimed for its remarkable playability and background interactivity, but the sequel takes the formula into a new dimension. There are new ideas, and additions to gameplay beyond our expectations, and a few surprises that are sure to please too. Featuring four original characters, four-player simultaneous combat and over 120 interactive objects, it's already clear that Eidos is on to a real winner. To see the whole scoop, turn to Page 26, but make sure you're in a well-lit room with at least one responsible parent or guardian nearby – Power Stone 2 nearly knocked me out, and I wouldn't want the same to happen to you...

Be careful

Russell Barnes
Editor, Dreamcast Monthly



dreamcast
128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING MONTHLY

G⊕⊕D KNIGHT, SWEET DREAMS...



F ORGET ABOUT SLEEPING, AND SAY G⊕⊕DBYE TO YOUR S⊕CIAL LIFE AS YOU EMBARK ON THE GREATEST ADVENTURE EVER TO GRACE THE DREAMCAST. SILVER IS AN EXPLOSIVE MIX OF ARCADE ACTION AND R⊕LEPLAYING ADVENTURE:

- X 27 QUESTS, 7 HUGE WORLDS AND HUNDREDS OF LOCATIONS TO EXPLORE
- X CONTROL UP TO 5 CHARACTERS
- X REAL-TIME COMBAT SYSTEM
- X 75 ENEMY TYPES

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SILVER



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issue 12 September 2000

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Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Capcom
Release: September 2000

Power Stone 2

The one we've all been waiting for...



exclusive
first look

26 Sept 2000 dreamcast

Those crazy kids are back! Get the scoop here first!



Bring the back and call it a day. The kids are back! It's the return of the Power Stone series, which is just as exciting as the first. The game is a platformer with a focus on combat. It's a great game for kids and adults alike. The graphics are excellent, and the sound is fantastic. The game is a must-have for anyone who loves platformers.

DON'T BE FOOLED INTO THINKING PS2 IS JUST A MULTI-PLAYER AFFAIR...

On the game. And when it's time to turn on the TV, the first thing you see is the Multiplayer Mode. That's right, the game is a platformer with a focus on combat. It's a great game for kids and adults alike. The graphics are excellent, and the sound is fantastic. The game is a must-have for anyone who loves platformers.

it's got character!

As you can see, the game is a platformer with a focus on combat. It's a great game for kids and adults alike. The graphics are excellent, and the sound is fantastic. The game is a must-have for anyone who loves platformers.

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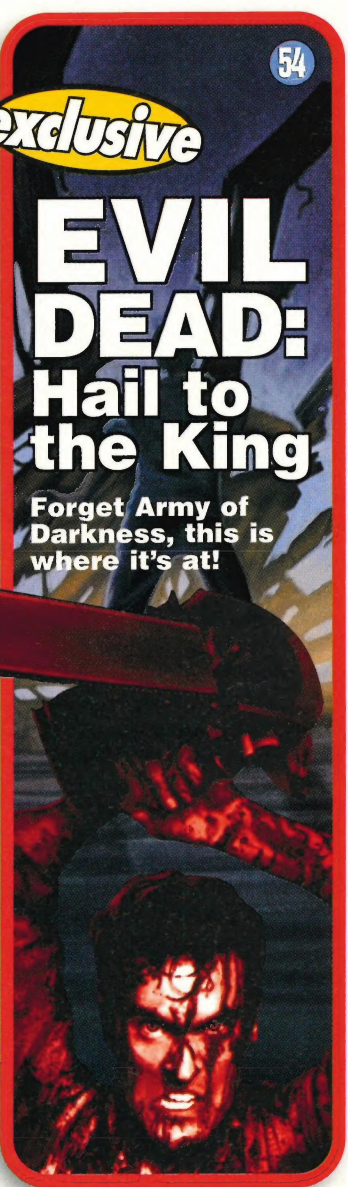
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exclusive

EVIL DEAD: Hail to the King

Forget Army of Darkness, this is where it's at!



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HALF-LIFE

It's Half-Life Gordon, but not as you know it!



32

Space Channel 5

It's got the tunes, it's got the looks, oh, and move over Lara Croft!



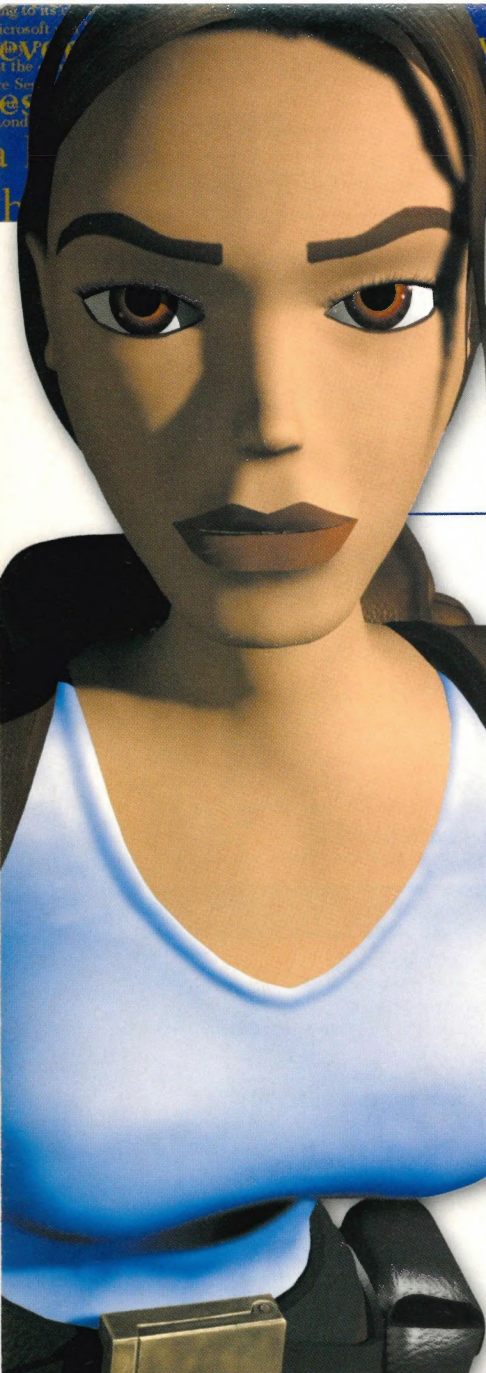
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exclusive

VIRTUA TENNIS

Sega's Virtua brand has another feather in its cap. Virtua Tennis rocks!





forum

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Back to the Old School

I have decided to write this e-mail to you on behalf of all the expert gamers in the videogames industry. It seems to me that now the beginner's market has taken over, there's no space for the real hardcore gamers.

Let me explain. First came the Spectrum; nothing really spectacular here, but it was the founder of the computer games industry. Next came the C64 and the Amiga, where most of the games required two buttons, which was standard for that time, I suppose. Then came the Master System with four buttons [TWO buttons – Ed] and the Mega Drive. As time went by, developers started making six-button games for the Mega Drive [?–Ed], and games became more

challenging. You had games like Streets of Rage and, of course, Street Fighter 2. What came next? Sega decided to release the Saturn; it had great six-button pads, with a nice shape and good side buttons. It also had expert



games like Fighter's Megamix, the Street Fighter Alpha series, Marvel Super Heroes and Virtual On. The market, however, decreased because the beginners that just like to drink beer and hack the pad and don't care about

quality games took over. Because the console was expensive, and the beginners were not committed to games, they were not going to pay their beer money for a quality console.

Sega realised there were more beginners than experts, and decided to stop making games for the Saturn, which I think was very unfair. Sony, however, picked up on the fact that the lame gamers were growing in number, and decided to make a beginner's console. It was cheap; it had perfect hacking pads that wouldn't break easily with all the button-bashing from the lamers and realised games in quantity, not for quality. If you look at the Saturn games, you see although there wasn't that many of them, 90% of the Sega and Capcom games were quality. Sony made the games cheap and easy to play, and which wouldn't require much skill to complete.

Because of Sony's success, Sega decided to release a beginner's console just like Sony, and they called it the Dreamcast. I mean, they always upgraded the spec and the pads ever since consoles were invented. Now Sega go from an eight-button pad to a four-button pad. The console looks like a child's playschool toy, for crying out loud!

Hope you can print this letter in your mag to show readers the real deal.

Thanks, VEGA by e-mail

Get it off your chest...

Who Will Win?

Who will win the Dreamcast vs PS2 fight later this year? Quite a few people have decided PS2 will win, but I personally have to disagree. While PS2 has a built-in DVD player, the Dreamcast has a built-in modem with online playability up and running before the PS2 even hits the shops. Also, the PS2 won't have online playability or even a modem until at least a year after the console is launched, which means the PS2 will only have a DVD player for the first year. Dreamcast, on the other hand, will have a modem and a DVD add-on available hopefully in time for Christmas. Turning our attention to games, PS2 will have a few amazing titles, Metal Gear Solid 2 to name one of them, but most of the other games are either rushed-out sequels or crap. Dreamcast

already has quite a lot of amazing or good titles out right now, and loads more are expected to come out within the next six months. Also, with a bit of luck, Dreamcast may even get its own version of Metal Gear Solid 2. Looking at the information above, I would say that Dreamcast is going to be better than the PS2 in every possible way.

Robert Gray, e-mail

DCM: Don't underestimate PS2 – it's a powerful console, but as you rightly say, the Japanese launch games were pretty poor. There won't be many PS2s in the

country in time for Christmas either. The Dreamcast was put together with the hardcore gamers in mind, hence the emphasis on modems and online games rather than DVD capabilities – online play is far more important to the true games fanatic. It's good that the Dreamcast was out there first too – there should be some seriously cool games on the shelves this Christmas, completely overshadowing the PS2.

Dreamcast Rules!

Thought I would add my opinion to the PS2-bashing that's been going on! Let me first say that I own a PlayStation and a Dreamcast, and both have their merits, but I am sick of hearing how the PS2 is going to whip the DC. Let me tell you, it isn't. How do I know? Well, I live near Manchester and

there's a computer fair on at the Bowlers Centre in Trafford Park. There's a stall there with an imported PS2 playing Ridge Racer 5 and Tekken Tag Tournament. I was quite excited to see these two in action, but after I did, I was very disappointed. Both games look like slightly-improved versions of their PS predecessors, and comparing like for like, Tekken could not be compared to Soul Calibur, and Ridge Racer 5 was so far off Metropolis SR it's scary. Trust me, if you have any Sony-devoted mates, take them to Bowlers and show them what they will be getting for their £300! So I say, bring on the PS2, the Dreamcast has nothing to worry about.

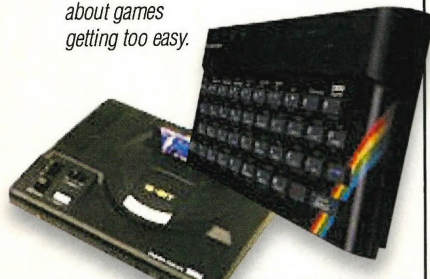
Justin, e-mail

DCM: Yep, the initial batch of PS2 titles is very disappointing. As you rightly say, Ridge Racer 5 and Tekken Tag are



dcm@quaynet.co.uk forum

DCM: Blimey – what colour's the sky on your planet? Let's leave your theory about the number of buttons on a pad reflecting the difficulty of the games on the console – suffice to say there are easy games and hard games on every machine. You've got a point about Sony changing the gaming scene and reaching the more casual gamer (hence EA's tacky sports licences on the PSX). It doesn't mean every game released since is for beginners, though. If the ISS series does indeed come to the Dreamcast (and it should), you'll see a perfect example of a modern connoisseurs game. We've yet to see a decent RPG on the DC, but the PSX's Final Fantasy and Suikoden games were hardly throwaway trash for the beery, were they? Fair enough, the Tomb Raider games sell to the casual crowd, but the purists have the far-superior Soul Reaver. And have you played Shenmue yet? No? Thought not... Make no mistake. The hardcore gamer is still with us, as are the hardcore games. Read our reviews and you won't go far wrong. If you still have a few old Mega Drive mags around, take a look at the letters page too. You'll find endless complaints about games getting too easy.



nothing special – just tweaked PSX games. They look like they were developed in a rush, and make no attempt to make the most of the host machine. When you see Tekken Tag Tournament in action, you wonder if Namco has ever heard of motion capture – they move so unrealistically they make the game look dated. In the run-up to Christmas, the Dreamcast is streets ahead – let's hope Sega take advantage of this and it stays that way.



DCM LETTER OF THE MONTH

DREAM MACHINE

Have you noticed how videogames machines turn the full circle? First the console was king, with Binatone's Pong and Atari's 2600, the first console where games were bought separately to the machine instead of being built-in. Then came the heyday of the home computer, with the Spectrum and C64 racing ahead as the console scene gradually faded away. It wasn't to last – as eight-bit gave way to 16-bit, the Mega Drive and SNES stormed ahead, leaving the 16-bit computers like the Atari ST and Amiga standing. Computers never really returned. Okay, the PC, once a clunky business-only tool, turned into a mega-powerful monster with some of the most incredible games around, but it's too expensive to rule the videogames roost. Although less powerful, the PlayStation carried the torch for consoles and stayed way ahead, even increasing the lead. But are the home computers going to make a comeback, courtesy of the Dreamcast?

No, I'm not going mad. Think about it. When first released, the Dreamcast offered CD-based games and unprecedented console access to the Internet. Later, a mouse and keyboard were released, and there's soon to be a hard drive too. So what's the difference? It's only a matter of time before someone releases a dedicated Dreamcast printer, or an interface to attach it to an existing one. Surely Dreamcast word processors and spreadsheets are just around the corner? Once again, history repeats itself, but this time because the most powerful console on Earth is evolving into much more than a mere games machine...

A Supworth, Kent

DCM: An interesting thought. With the Dreamcast's Windows compatibility, there's no reason on Earth why this shouldn't happen. We feel the DC will never take over as a serious computer user's machine of choice. You won't see them in offices, for example (except ours, of course), but for gamers with modest computing needs, it's ideal. What do other readers think?

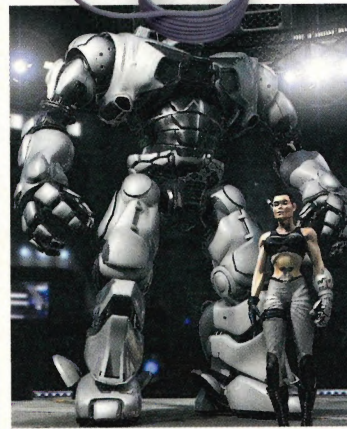


Microsoft Malady

What does Microsoft actually do for the Dreamcast? It seems that they do very little to me! They don't provide anything for it like Windows or a decent browser like Microsoft Explorer. They don't even release things like joysticks, Steering wheels, etc. They are more bothered about the X-Box, one of the three consoles that will put Sega out of the console race once and for all unless they pull their fingers out. The only thing Microsoft like about the DC is that it bears the Microsoft name.

Michael Phillips, e-mail

DCM: Yes, things have been a little quiet on the Microsoft front. Considering the Dreamcast's based on PC architecture, you'd think they might consider converting some of their software like Microsoft Flight Sim too. Still, we can't see Sega ever disappearing from the console scene. There will always be a hardcore of Sega fans like VEGA (see previous letter).



WIN A GAME OF YOUR CHOICE EVERY MONTH...



gameplay.com



Another month, another lucky reader winning our prestigious Letter of the Month award. As well as a free game of your choice from Gameplay, we're also giving away a six-month subscription to the magazine. What more could you wish for? For your chance to be the proud owner of the game of your choice, and a six month subscription, simply write to us with your usual trials and tribulations – it couldn't be easier! Letter of the Month winners receive the game at the top of their wish list, and it's sent to you courtesy of those lovely people at Gameplay, bless 'em. Make sure you include your full name and address and the name of the game you would like to win or you'll be kicking yourself for a week when you don't. Don't just sit there – get writing!

...PLUS! A SIX-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO DCM

NEWSCAST

bringing you the latest news and views from around the world

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NOW THAT'S MAGIC

And no sign of Debbie McGee...

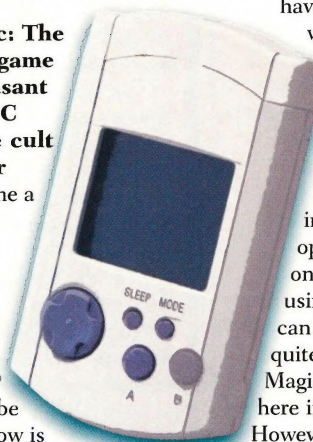
Fans of the Magic: The Gathering card game are in for a pleasant surprise, as a new DC release based on the cult hobby is heading our way. It's not the first time a Magic game has been developed either, with a critically-acclaimed PC title lining the bargain bins barely six months later. What's going to make this one different?

Not too sure yet, to be honest. What we do know is the plot follows a chap hunting for five crystals which have thoughtlessly been

lost across his world, and you have to play some cards to win them back. Sounds like one of our late-night games of poker to us, but we'll spare you the intimate details of our midnight shenanigans.

What makes this look interesting is the opportunity for a good online game, and apparently, using your trusty VMU, you can swap cards too. Release is quite a way off in Japan, so Magic won't be appearing over here in the immediate future.

However, with a Stateside release definitely confirmed, we reckon the UK version will follow shortly after that.



SEGA MAKING PROFIT

The cost-cutting could have done the trick

It wasn't too long ago in Japan that all we had out of Sega was doom and gloom, with losses mounting and the Dreamcast seemingly not living up to expectations. Well, since then, the Dreamcast has picked up the pace, the PlayStation2 backlash has started and Sega actually has a sporting chance of seeing a profit.

Furthermore, the company has cash to spend, thanks in part to a

shedding of around 1000 jobs over the course of the last year or two. That bit's far from ideal, we grant you. Anyway, whereas last year Sega lost nearly 43 billion yen, they're looking to have chalked up around 1.5 billion yen in profit this time around. Which is good news if they reinvest the cash, rather than spend it on mega-rich, bloated shareholders.

THIS SOLDIER TAKES

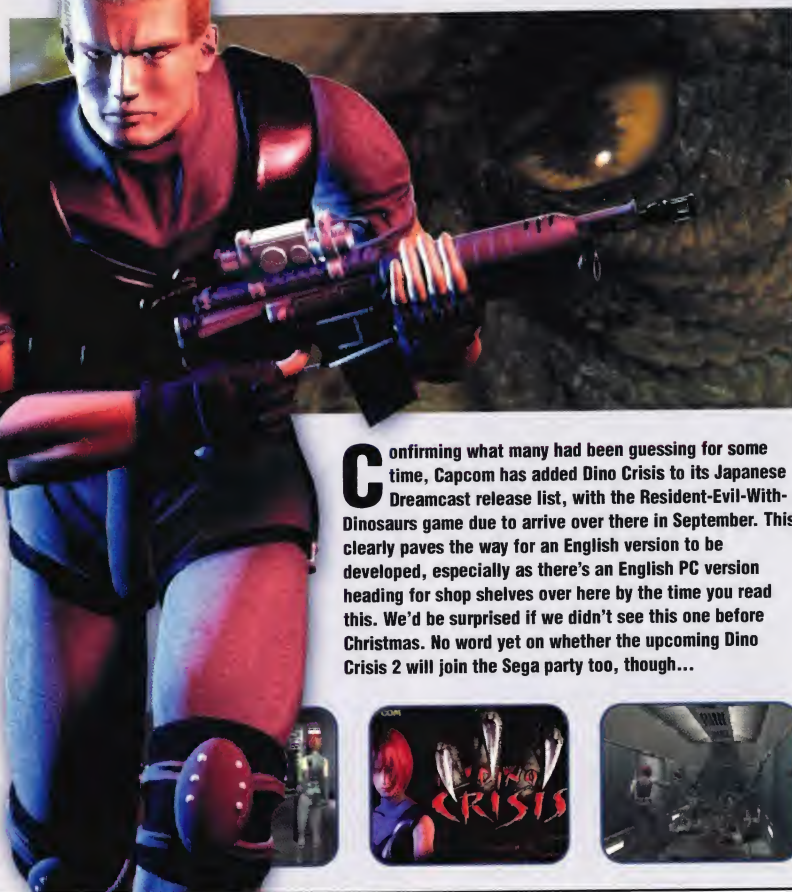
And he shoots all your limbs off too

Those who occasionally take a gander at the PC scene have no doubt had the very fabric of their moral fibre crushed when they saw Activision's recent **Soldier of Fortune**. Taking the role of a mercenary, it's a first-person action game à la Half-Life, only it claims to be the most graphically violent in the genre. Several limbs just hang off when shot, for instance. Also, it's possible you could shoot someone in various parts of their body, but if you haven't fired the killer shot, they may



CAPCOM DO THE DINOSAUR

Dino Crisis is on for Dreamcast



Confirming what many had been guessing for some time, Capcom has added Dino Crisis to its Japanese Dreamcast release list, with the Resident-Evil-With-Dinosaurs game due to arrive over there in September. This clearly paves the way for an English version to be developed, especially as there's an English PC version heading for shop shelves over here by the time you read this. We'd be surprised if we didn't see this one before Christmas. No word yet on whether the upcoming Dino Crisis 2 will join the Sega party too, though...



■ No go for Dreamcast?

INSIDE WORD

And it ain't good news...

If industry voices are to be believed, the much-rumoured Dreamcast port of ISS Pro Evolution, surely the best football game to ever grace a console, is exactly that – a rumour. Konami has denied all along that a DC version is being developed, and it could well be that they were telling the truth after all. Which would be a mighty shame, because whilst it plays a dream on the PlayStation, it isn't half shit to look at.



HARRIER ATTACK!

It's another one for you retro-loving people

Even before Sonic gestated his first prick, the debate in the arcades was over whether Space Harrier was just a turbo-charged, hyper-fast rolling demo or actually one of the best shoot-'em-ups of its day. Most people opted for the latter, and the damned game even made it to the likes of the ZX Spectrum in decent nick.

Anyway, bringing the story to the present day and offering a little relevance at the same time, the news from Sega is that they're working on a new version of the game, currently living under the title Planet Harrier. Whether they're going to stick rigidly to the old formula of flying around the screen blasting all manner of things that come in your direction isn't clear, but the game will be released as an arcade machine soon. We're betting this one has a good chance of a Dreamcast release, and certainly the multiplayer capabilities potentially offer some intriguing online battles. We'll keep you posted.

NO PRISONERS

still use their one remaining arm to fire off a bullet with their last breath.

So brace yourself, people, because this game is coming to the Dreamcast. It's due later in the year, and will have the same troubles that other similar titles have on their way to the DC,

namely how to successfully transfer the old keyboard-and-mouse PC control system to a joypad. Unless they use a keyboard and mouse system. But that's stating the obvious. Look for more on Soldier of Fortune in a future issue.



ENTERPRISE IS DEAD

Long live Sega

Over in Japan, the high-ups and assorted suits that run Sega have opted to change the company's full name. Previously

known as Sega Enterprises, the company is now called plain old Sega. Doesn't affect us really, but just a nice piece of trivia to recite in the pub. If you run out of things to say. And can't afford another drink.

TEAM 17 SIDE WITH TITUS

Worms switch teams...



The upcoming Worms World Party, currently tentatively scheduled for the end of the year, will not be published by Hasbro like its predecessor (with Worms Armageddon being the latter's only contribution to the Sega so far, although Frogger 2 is due in the autumn). Instead, developer Team 17 has inked a deal with Titus and Virgin which sees the latter distributing the title in the UK.

The deal also covers the long-

awaited Stunt GP, originally mooted for the start of this year, and now scheduled for the first three months of next. Mixing racing with some death-defying stunt work, the game still looks fantastic, but we're really quite keen to play it soon. Please.



THE KING ISN'T DEAD

Even if the company has nipped off back home

SNK, who recently withdrew from Europe, taking the rather swanky Neo Geo Pocket console with them (a machine that coincidentally launched on exactly the same day as the Dreamcast), is still hard at work in Japan on King of Fighters 2000, a mad beat-'em-up which is being rolled out for the seventh (count 'em!) instalment in the franchise. Currently, the game is being developed for the arcade, but a Dreamcast version is likely to follow a few months later. We'll bring you more closer to the time.



NO PS2s ON THE SHELVES

Sony shock industry with pre-order announcement

Anyone walking into their local Electronics Boutique in November, intent on walking out with a PlayStation2, is going to be in for a bit of a shock. That's because Sony's latest master plan means that only people who pre-order the console will receive one this year, with stock not being available to sit on shelves until 2001. The revolutionary announcement has been met with extreme caution by retailers, although Sega must be pleased that for the second year running, Dreamcast will be the only next-generation console available on the shelves in the Christmas rush.

EIDOS TO CROSS THE CHANNEL

Great British publisher to go European?



We like Eidos here at DCM. They gave us the cracking Power Stone early on in the Dreamcast's life (and you can read about the fantastic-looking sequel on page 26), and has continued to bring quality PC titles across to the DC. The likes of Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation and Soul Reaver immediately spring to mind, and let's not forget that it was their logo on the fantastic Resident Evil: Code Veronica. Anyway, enough nostalgia. Due to various goings-on in the big city, it appears the company, one of the last British publishers around, is susceptible to a take-over bid, with French giant Infogrames currently leading the race. Infogrames, of course, is a friend of the Dreamcast too, and has swallowed up companies such as GT Interactive and Gremlin in the past year or two. Yet whilst any move is unlikely to affect Dreamcast output, it does mean another great British software name could be on the path to being no more.

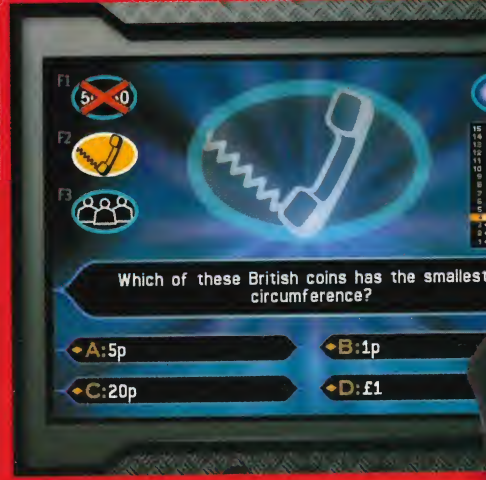


MAKE YOUR MILLIONS SOON

Date announced for Tarrant on DC

Eidos' game of the hit TV quiz show Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? is well under way, with a release date of 29th September currently being mooted. The Dreamcast version is definite too, and it's believed the game will utilise the vocal talents of Mr Tarrant himself. And expect plenty of that 'final answer' shit too.

The computer version of the American edition of the show was a major hit in the States last Christmas, and has already spawned one sequel. For the UK version, Eidos has appointed Hothouse to do the coding, and they're promising over 1,000 questions which won't repeat themselves until all have been asked once. You can play in single or multiplayer modes, and there are also Head-to-Head and Team Game variants. Lifelines are intact, and for Phone-a-Friend the company has enlisted the vocal talents of ten different people who may or may not be able to assist you in your quest for imaginary cash. Oh, and that bloody irritating music is included too. So will you be taking the hot-seat? Check out our preview on Page 44 for more details...



NO NEW SOUL?

But we want it...

Possibly the best game released on any format last year (save for perhaps Unreal Tournament), Soul Calibur was an exquisite piece of gaming with which we instantly fell in love. Ever since its release, rumour has been rife that a sequel is just a matter of time, with Namco never admitting to the fact but usually-reliable sources saying they're keeping things close to their chest. However, nearly a year on, it appears there may have been an element of truth to what they were saying, with the only other Dreamcast announcement of note being puzzle game Mr Driller, due later in the year. It's supposed to be a good game, but we don't think it'll make our top three in quite the same way that Soul Calibur did. Still, the word seems to be that Soul Calibur 2 isn't on the roster for the near-future after all. Which has put us in a really bad mood.

PROBE CLOSE DOWN

Acclaim cut the costs

Long-running developer Probe is, it seems, no more, as parent company Acclaim has shut down the studio in a bid to cut costs and be more efficient with their resources. Or something. Anyway, Probe is the hands behind the likes of Fur Fighters and Re-Volt, with the former in particular being something of an office favourite. Ah well...



WIMBLEDON'S GONE, TENNIS IS NOT HERE

You'll have to wait until the Autumn

Sega's superb-looking Virtua Tennis isn't going to be released until September, having already missed the key selling opportunity of the Wimbledon tennis tournament. The game, a conversion of the staggeringly-good arcade

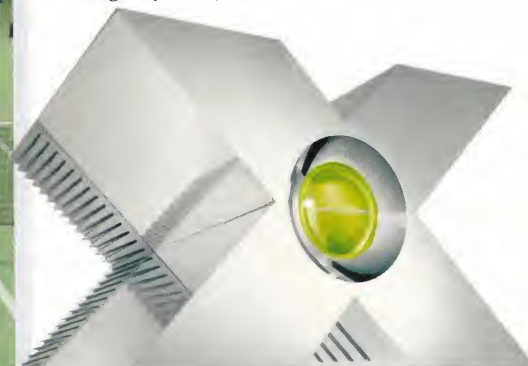
machine, is getting many industry insiders very excited thanks to the wonderful visuals and supremely sublime gameplay. Hopefully the fact that it'll be pissing it down by the time it arrives won't put off the ever-fickle buying public.



NINTENDO AWAKE

They're about to show the world the Dolphin

Of the two new games consoles to launch in 2001, Nintendo's Dolphin has easily been the most reclusive, with the company revealing very little thus far on their long under-wraps project (contrast this with the all-singing, all-dancing announcement of Microsoft's X-Box a couple of months back). Anyway, Nintendo has now booked space at the European Computer Trade Show in London this autumn, intent, it seems, on showing the world its new toy. Mind you, by the time they finally get it on the shop shelves, with a bit of luck the Dreamcast will be doing very nicely, thank you very much.



X marks the spot, but is Microsoft boxing clever?



THE PRICE STAYS DOWN

High Street keeps the DC price down

Last month we revealed how High Street stores were discounting their Dreamcasts with immediate effect at the cash register, and now we can confirm that since we last spoke, none of the major chains have raised their prices back up to the £200 level. This is in spite of Sega's continued non-announcement of a formal cut to the £150 that most stores are selling the console for. Furthermore, many retailers are now chucking some quality games into the deal, with the likes of Power Stone and Trickstyle sweetening the package. Our advice? If you haven't got a DC yet, this is a great time to buy one...



SEGA SPONSOR ANOTHER FOOTIE TEAM

But they're not British

The mighty cheque book of Sega has now been waved under the nose of Spanish football side R.C. Deportivo de La Coruña, who will be the first Spanish footie team to have a videogame company as a sponsor. Sega's sponsorship of Arsenal continues, of course, what we want to know is will the Spanish have to tolerate grown men dressed as Sonic at their football grounds?



CHU CHU - IT'S A HIT

They're just giving it away

Since its bold decision to give away a free copy of Chu Chu Rocket to every Dreamcast owner who registered for one, Sega has been over-run with requests. Currently, the what they are calling as the planet's first online console game has been sent out to over 100,000 people across Europe in less than a month, and the requests for the title are still coming in. The Dreamarena system too has felt the benefits, with over 300,000 people registered, offering some 3,000,000 hits per month.

If you haven't got yourself a copy of Chu Chu Rocket yet, the words 'what are you waiting for?' spring very quickly to mind. Log on to Dreamarena now and it's be yours, absolutely free of charge. And it's a top game too. Even if it is full of mice.



MORE EVIL

And it's looking to stay...

Had your appetite thoroughly whetted by the likes of Resident Evil 2 and Resident Evil: Code Veronica? Hope so, because the PlayStation release Resident Evil 3 is next to head over to the Dreamcast, and naturally enough it looks a damn sight better than it did on Sony's antiquated machine. It comes from Capcom again, who is putting the finishing touches to Dino Crisis first, but we should expect the Resi 3 by the end of the year. So that's some decent news, anyway.



GAMES ON THE PHONE

Sega and Motorola announce a deal

COLUMNS™

Description:
Columns™ is a puzzle game. Rotate and drag the falling pieces. Once 3 or more pieces are aligned, they will disappear. The game is over when the pieces reach the top.

How to Play:
Use the Four Buttons and the Directional Pad to rotate and drag pieces.
Push/Press to start playing.
1. Move the Green LEFT
2. Move the Green RIGHT
3. Push/Press to start playing
4. Push/Press to start playing

SEGA

A recently-inked deal between Sega of Japan and mobile phone company Motorola brings, in their words, 'a wide assortment of entertainment software to an innovative class of Java technology-enabled wireless phones, pagers and personal digital assistants (PDAs)'. Translation? Games on phones, and similar wireless devices. Sega provide the software, which includes such titles as Golf, Black Jack, Columns, Borkov (whatever that is), Sonic Logic, Sonic Head On, Sonic's Bomb Squad, Sonic J and even Sonic The Pizza Deliverer. Actually, the last one is a complete lie. More news closer to release.

PIRACY

It's here, and Sega don't like it

Thus far, the Dreamcast has been relatively free of the curse of piracy. However, in recent weeks, more and more Dreamcast games have been posted on the Internet for download. Originally, it was thought that the special one-gigabyte capacity CDs that the Dreamcast uses, as opposed to the standard 650MB that a normal CD can hold, would render piracy techniques ineffective. However, it seems many games are not filling the discs up, to the point where several are less than 650MB in size and thus can fit on an ordinary CD. Sega, quick to react, have issued the following statement: 'Though we managed to prevent counterfeits of Dreamcast products for nearly two years from its first release in Japan, a period unheard of in the gaming business, we have recently become aware that counterfeit Dreamcast software is

now available on some Internet web sites and in some retail outlets. Manufacturing and distribution of counterfeit software is a violation of our intellectual property rights and is illegal. Importantly, such items prevent us and our developers from recovering the costs of creating the software, thereby hindering the development of new and innovative software products. Further, many of the discs we have reviewed to date do not function properly, and, needless to say, we provide no warranties regarding such software and any damage they may cause to your console. We are in the process of analysing the practises of the counterfeiters of these products. Rest assured we will aggressively take all appropriate actions to prevent such illegal activities and reclaim the market for legitimate products'.

Furthermore, Sega is aggressively fighting the mod chip market which has cost PlayStation developers so much cash. The company is making sure that new games are incompatible with modified and chipped Dreamcasts, ironically meaning the only version of a game those with a chipped DC can play is the pirate version. It's a no-win situation, certainly, but that aforementioned irony isn't lost on us.





DONALD DUCK, DC

Insert your own quackers-esque gag

Chalk up another one to the Ubi Soft roster, as it brings the thrilling-sounding Donald Duck Quack Attack onto the Dreamcast in November. The game, as part of the company's deal with Disney, is on virtually every other format as well, but we just thought you'd like to know anyway.

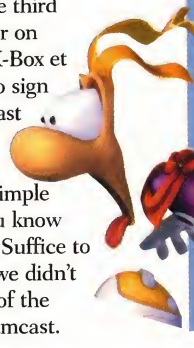


NewsCAST

SO WHAT'S UP WITH RAYMAN?

His third adventure may miss the DC...

Rayman 3, the third instalment featuring the strange platform game character who doesn't seem to have anything even vaguely resembling limbs, is in development. This is good news, as we gave Rayman 2 a hefty 9/10 in our review. And yet whilst the third adventure is set to appear on PlayStation2, Dolphin, X-Box et al, at this stage there's no sign whatsoever of a Dreamcast version on the schedules. We trust this is nothing more than a simple oversight, but will let you know when we find out more. Suffice to say we'd be surprised if we didn't see the third encounter of the Man of Ray on the Dreamcast.



FILMS THROUGH YOUR DREAMCAST!

Yet another new deal signed by Sega

Thanks to a new alliance with Virgin Net, Sega will offer entertainment and leisure services through their online Dreamarena portal. Available free of charge, part of the deal involves setting up an exclusive film deal, with content including film previews, web casts, details on new releases, a film finder and the latest box office charts. It can be found at dreamscreens.virgin.net

The site will be built up, is hosted by Virgin, and naturally enough there will be a competition

too with, erm, a Dreamcast as the prize. As the Dreamscreens service is only be available to Dreamcast users, the innovation in the choice of prize simply staggers us.

This is just one of the various initiatives Sega have for the Dreamarena portal, and new channels will be added to it over the next few months. And you can read about them all in Dreamcast Monthly, which may well be running a competition to win a copy of Dreamcast Monthly. Sorry. We'll behave ourselves now...

PLAY ONLINE

www.dreamcast-europe.com

Welcome to Dreamarena, the exclusive website for online gaming. From you can play... head to head online through your Dreamcast... (text continues with instructions for online play)



THE ALIENS ARE INVADING

Can you stand the excitement?

It's a standard, unspectacular plot line that's been used ever since the dawn of videogames. Aliens are invading the Earth, and the player gets to destroy them all and save the day. And yes, it's also the basis of another new Sega arcade machine, heading for the Dreamcast shortly after. It's called Alien Front, and basically involves several players sitting in super-doooper futuristic tanks and blasting seven shades out of the alien threat. Mind you, aliens tend to be armed with alien weapons, meaning they're going to have an arsenal you're unlikely to have seen before heading towards you for a close-up. More news closer to the time, but suffice to say we think this one looks rather cool.

THE BEACH

There's no Leonardo Di Caprio to be found...

Dreamcast™

BEACH FOOTBALL

CHALLENGE

The wonders of deadlines mean we don't actually know at the time of writing who won the damn thing, so we'll just make some guesses and hope they turn out to be true. Try this lot. Manchester United All Stars got beaten in the first round by the Grimsby Town Reserves, and John Barnes' job as Liverpool All Stars coach was lost at half time after he discovered that the players were revolting. And then Birmingham City won the overall tournament, putting the likes of Cantona firmly in their place. If it doesn't actually turn out like this, be sure to let us know.



ONLINE GAMING ON TRACK

A different kind of Chu Chu

Those thirsting for more online fun after Chu Chu Rocket may find it in an unlikely place, if a certain game that's going online over in the States also carries the feature to Europe. The game? None other than strategy extravaganza Railroad Tycoon II, which landed with a blip on the PlayStation, although better things are hoped for the Dreamcast version. Check out page 34 for more...





BYE BYE WILD THINGS

Peripheral manufacturer not doing Dreamcast

Third-party peripheral manufacturer Wild Things, who has so far produced, er, a SCART cable for the Dreamcast, is set to abandon the format. The company, who had a couple of new DC joypads on their website advertised as coming soon, is presumably off to other formats. Which is okay. We'll just give our money to the likes of Joytech, Blaze and Interact instead.

MORE REASONS TO WRESTLE

A good, old-fashioned grapple on the way

The latest wrestling game to come from THQ is well under way, and to prove it, the developers have kindly set up a website dedicated to the forthcoming game, WWF Royal Rumble. The site, which is based on the main THQ page over at www.thq.com, offers the usual tasters, including some shots of the game. This is the game where you can take on several players at once, and so when it does finally arrive in a few months time, it could well be the first bona fide quality Dreamcast wrestling game. We'll believe it when we see it, of course...



ECCO BOUNCES BACK

The dolphin's due for a sequel

Despite the fact that the game's dividing the playing public as we speak – it's either a supremely relaxing adventure or a load of old toss, depending on who you talk to – Ecco The Dolphin is clearly another high-profile release to add to the Sega cannon. Little surprise, then, that the aquatic defender of the future is winging his way back to the Dreamcast for a sequel, and whilst the game hasn't been officially confirmed, it's reckoned that Appaloosa will be handling the coding duties again.

We'd be surprised if the game wasn't to go online in some form, but let's wait for official news of the return of Mr Ecco. We certainly don't expect to see anything even vaguely resembling a finished product for a good 12 months minimum. Which, knowing our powers of prediction, means it'll be out on Friday week.



THE ONLINE GAMING CONFERENCE

Big heads get together

Such is the gravity of online gaming these days, despite the fact that the majority of machines on the market simply can't do it, that a major conference is being called at the end of September to talk about the future of it. Loads of important and very brainy people will be there, as well as the odd representative of the PlayStation2 (cheap, we know, but we simply couldn't resist it). Top of the bill, of course, in our completely unbiased view, will be the folks behind Dreamarena.

Under discussion will be things such as how to make lots of money out of online gaming, an assessment of the current position, as well as future technologies and where the industry is going on what is seen as a more and more fundamental facet of gaming. No doubt we will reap the many rewards of this sharing of knowledge over the coming years. We hope so.

global news

SO WHAT'S WITH THE JAPANESE?

Sega's balance sheets aren't adding up...

The latest sales figures from the Land of the Rising Sun continue to baffle us, as Japanese games-buyers continue in their failure to reward quality software. Already, games such as Crazy Taxi and Shenmue have failed to sell quite as many as expected, and there are other titles which have garnered excellent reviews, but without gaining a big impact at the cash register. The latest casualty is the fantastic Jet Grind Radio, which has been outsold by the latest attempt at cashing in on the Street Fighter franchise. Message to all those reading: when we finally get Shenmue and Jet Grind Radio, let's not make the same mistake...



IT JUST ISN'T TENNIS

Virtua Tennis proves love-all in States

Strange, isn't it? You'd never expect much from a tennis game, and yet Sega's Virtua Tennis is clearly such a smashing title (ho, ho) that a once-dormant genre has been reignited in spectacular style. And in the States, for once, the quality of a game is being rewarded with strong sales, as many are simply not able to get their paws on a copy as it's selling out so fast. We expect a repeat of such a buying frenzy when we get the game in September.



CRAZY TAXI GOES PARTYING

Ibiza watch out!

And the Sega promotional bandwagon rolls on still further. With the recent release of Crazy Taxi in Spain, those cunning folks decided to get themselves a real 1960s taxi cab and (you can see this one coming, can't you?) take various important DJ-type people around the various clubs on the island of Ibiza. Furthermore, a competition will run to offer people, er, a ride in the taxi. Nothing like a high-value prize, eh?

To add to the Crazy Taxi presence, Sega will install pods with the game running to keep holidaymakers entertained when they're not, ahem, up to other things. Plus they've put a Dreamcast booth in our local UGC cinema too. Not startling news, we know, but we thought you'd appreciate a little personalisation. It had Ecco the Dolphin running, if you're still interested.

THE VAMPIRE CHRONICLES

The latest adventures from Capcom...

With new entries in the Power Stone and Street Fighter series now pretty-much wrapped up, Capcom has turned its attention to its latest fighting game, Vampire Chronicles. The game is essentially a compilation of sorts, with three vampire titles mixed together to bring the product we see on shop shelf. The Japanese version, as is becoming more common, is completely playable online as well, although with doubts currently arising as to the online status of Power Stone 2, we suggest that there's a fair amount of work to do before we get such a treat over here. We'll bring you more on the fighting shenanigans that are Vampire Chronicles in a future issue...



AND FAREWELL TOO TO THQ?

Only short term plans, apparently

Publisher THQ has reiterated its belief that the Dreamcast is a short-term device, and certainly not an item in its long-term planning. It's disappointing news for sure, especially as the company has the likes of WWF Royal Rumble, MTV Sports Skateboarding and the Evil Dead game on their roster for the rest of the year. Beyond that, it's anyone's guess...



STAR WARS IS BACK - AGAIN!

The continuing rash of Star Wars games may only just now be heading for the Dreamcast, with Racer due for imminent release and the lacklustre Jedi Power Battles due to follow before the end of the year, but still the words 'cash' and 'in' continue to spring to mind. And let's not forget too that only the other issue we were commenting on the fact that more and more licences are now being attached to Mario Kart-style games, making a fun racer but generally nothing particularly brilliant.

So now we introduce - Star Wars Super Bombad Racing! And it's, er, a Star Wars cartoony-look kart racing game. Oh dear. But before we complain too much, there's a fair amount on offer in the game, including the ability to race against characters such as Darth Maul, Yoda

(no, we don't make this up) and other characters from the Star Wars universe. Then there's the usual volley of power-ups and stuff like that.

Pardon us if we can't summon up bags of enthusiasm, though we'll be as happy as the next person if it turns out to be a good game. It just sounds like a bad idea to us hardened Star Wars types. Darth Maul driving a rally kart? You've got to admit it sounds a bit dodgy. Anyroad, it's not out until next year, so we'll update you over the next couple of months.



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DEVIL
INSIDE

HELLBOY

Gift

exclusive

SHOCK, HORROR - TOTAL GAMEPLAY

DEVIL INSIDE - HELLBOY: DOGS OF THE NIGHT - GIFT



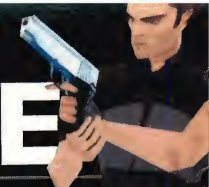
SHOCK, HORROR - TOTAL GAMEPLAY

With 500 people working from its French office, Cryo is changing from a company based on adventure gaming to one that will create a wealth of diverse games on all formats. Derek dela Fuente dons his beret, drapes his onions and hops on his bike...



Publisher: Cryo Interactive • Developer: Cryo Interactive
Released: 4th Quarter 2000 • Genre: Action Adventure

DEVIL INSIDE



DEVIL INSIDE

An immersive masterpiece in the making...



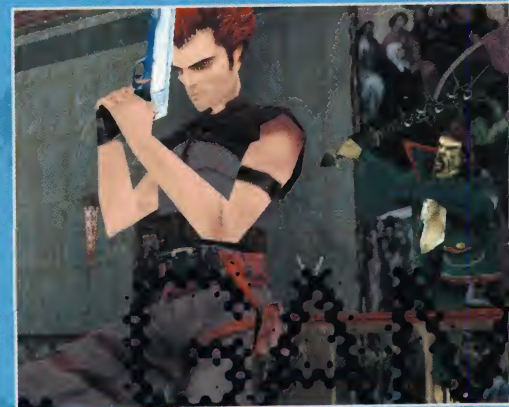
From the French team Gamesquad and designer Hubert Chardot, who some say is the Peter Molyneux of France, came games such as the Alone in the Dark series. Now they're working on Devil Inside, a game full-to-bursting with inventive ideas and polish that will have all DC gamers thrilled to bits!

Devil Inside takes a direction similar to that of a Hollywood movie, and takes place in the crazy world of the American cable-television gameshow. It delivers breathtaking suspense, action and adventure, and brings together the gameplay and graphics that keep players glued to their screens. Some may find the game disturbing, but the team have not worried at all about censorship, which is the problem of the publisher. They just want to present a game people will play and get a buzz from.

Let Me Tell You a Story...
The user controls Dave Ackland, a



former cop turned journalist, who now carries out his investigations for the local TV channel specialising in the weird and bizarre. Dave is no ordinary person; he has a strange and unusual power. He can change into his delectable female double, the devilish Deva, a leather-clad devil with supernatural powers. Devil Inside follows Dave's adventures through a haunted house where heinous crimes have been committed. Every move Dave makes is captured on camera and live coverage is shown back in the studio in front of an audience increasingly eager to see the macabre. As both Dave and Deva, the player must fight against the living dead, possessing enemies and ultimately solving crimes to finally lay the evil to rest. The specifically-designed 3D engine allows for doors to be opened, new areas to be entered and new monsters to be



■ You could cut yourself on those elbows!

encountered, all with no delay in gameplay! The engine also fluidly supports the game's superb graphics, animation, and integral camera angles.

Devil Inside has many monstrous enemies to combat, each more vicious than the last. Use everything you have - your psychic powers, your weapons and your wits. The game has many features and selling points - too many to go through in detail.

Lights, Camera, Action!
There are more than 40 different enemies, each more macabre and vicious than the next and the game builds as you play. If you like your weapons and powers, there are plenty - over 20 different weapons and psychic abilities, including flamethrowers, crossbows, machine guns, shotguns, even electric sanders and power saws! If it's variety in locales you want, once again the team has been really

IT'S IMPORTANT TO GIVE THE
STORY PACE - THIS KIND OF
GAME NEEDS RHYTHM



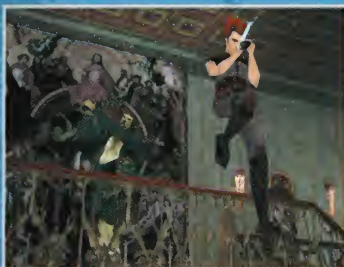
dream

DEVIL INSIDE - HELLBOY: DOGS OF THE NIGHT - GIFT



BREATHTAKING SUSPENSE, ACTION AND ADVENTURE

creative, for there are over 100 different places to explore, with inside and outside scenarios - each with dynamic lighting and eerie sound effects adding to the dark atmosphere. Different camera angles (chosen by the player or automatic) allow the best vantagepoint for each area. Characters can run, jump, side-



step, crouch and roll, and Deva can even fly. Intelligent AI allows enemies to run away, hide, regroup and learn by their mistakes, and each enemy has its own characteristics and attack modes.

In Devil Inside, action and adventure are very closely bound, and designed to grow in intensity during the story we have to tell. The main difficulty from the team's perspective was to get the right balance between exploration, investigation and pure action, with running and fights, as the team explained. "It's important to give to a story its pace. This kind of game needs rhythm. In a script, actions are characterised by verbs, then adventure is described with adjectives and words. The alternation between rushes of adrenaline and suspense phases is

delicate, because it's the heart of the game that has to stay invisible for the user".

Alone In The...

With the developers having coded the Alone in the Dark series, many may see this as a sort of clone, but the team suggested otherwise. "We hope that Devil Inside will be more interactive than Alone. Firstly, because the technologies are more efficient nowadays. Secondly, we think the Devil Inside concept offers a new approach to the genre. You're the star of a TV show. You have to take care of your cameraman, you're stressed, and you're praised or booed by the public. The audience ratings are important too. If you miss your goal, it can be 'show over' (the sponsors of the network pull out). And last (but

not least) you generate Deva, the devil inside you. Add to that beautiful animations, astonishing locations, a good management of technologies and Theo, an efficient tool which permits you to set as many lights and cams as you need in sets designed with thousands of polygons".

Gamesquad, like many, is trying to bring forth a game with emotion that the players will have empathy with, but can you honestly see players crying whilst they're playing a game? The team certainly thought so, as they emotionally expressed. "Devil Inside is really created to give emotions (fear & laughs) to the gamers. Games are the new media, and this media becomes adult the day a gamer cries (for instance: because of the death of a virtual friend who shared a part of his adventures). At this time, that





kind of thing never happens. But it's a question of time. Games are young (less than 20 years old) and have already explored very little territory in terms of stories, universes, techniques. The most limiting factors in games are time and money. For the rest, I think you always to adapt techniques, design, stories, animations and music to the platform you work with. The main part of our job is to make things simple and evident for the user. The less the helpline operators work, the better you are".

Express Yourself

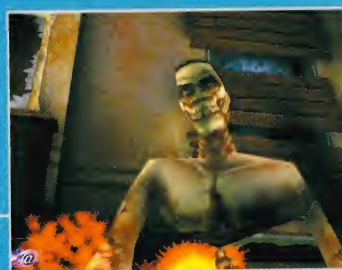
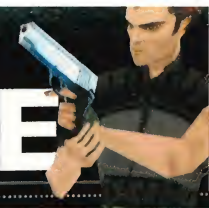
Dave, the hero you play, is a TV star of a live show called Devil Inside. His missions are given by the game itself (what he discovers, a girl he has to save). Jack The Ripper, the host of the show, is followed and supported by a very demonstrative audience, which challenges Dave, who has to maintain the suspense

to hit record audience ratings. The story takes place in Shadow Gate, a huge mansion set on Hollywood Heights. You play inside this big house and outside. The player has a large area of movement and free circulation, and he's not forced to succeed in his challenges nor to tackle his missions in a pre-established order. Of course, major events (the script is divided into three acts) happen when he reaches some goals. There are no breaks with boring dialogues between action and adventure.

Devil Inside is constantly changing. There's action, loads of fighting, brilliant interaction, great dialogue and some pure adventure, eg. finding a letter to discover secret passages, obtaining manuscripts and translating an old Indian text which explains a part of the fate that invaded Shadow Gate.

At no stage does the game get bogged down in one game style. It

DEVIL INSIDE



is the great mix that makes this shine out, together with its very dark, ambient and somewhat sinister look. Not forgetting the sound effects and music. Hubert Chardot, the inspiration behind the game, elucidated on this. "Music, sounds and voices are important. They instinctively enhance the effects and the ambience, and act powerfully on the mind and behaviour of the gamer. Music and sound give direct emotions you can identify. With Devil Inside, we have the chance to work with Christian Sales, who is a very good composer and a real gentleman

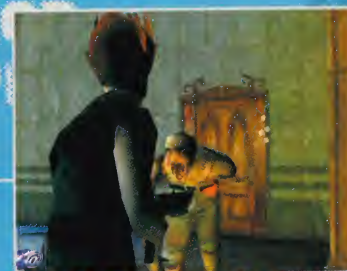
with talent, kindness, creativity and a deep and fast understanding of the needs of the media".

DC Specs

With the game already out on the PC, there will be some changes for the Dreamcast version, especially the controls. Dave can shoot with weapons, walk, run, strafe, kneel, choose weapons and a lot more. Controls must be spot-on, and we're promised they will be!

So Much to Do - So Much to See!

Devil is an action/adventure game, with puzzles, exploration, guns, thrills and a twist of macabre humour. You must visit a very huge mansion, fight 40 different enemies (each has his own behaviour patterns). You can choose between bird's-eye, third-person and first-person perspectives too. The main ambition of Gamesquad is to realise the best action adventure game ever, and it could well be achieved.



USE EVERYTHING - ACTION AND ADVENTURE



GIFT

Cheeky, humorous and fun. Gift, a new hero, makes his way to your Dreamcast...

French Gift from Cryo

Cryo is ready to set the gaming world alight with this cute and loveable character, who they hope will become a household name and, no doubt, a profitable brand. A lot of time and resources are being put into this game, that will be released on all formats around the end of the year.



With the success of titles such as Croc, Rayman and even Abe's Odyessy, platform/adventure/ action games are always safe bets. Just get a central character that's not too cute or a game that's not too sickly-sweet on the eye-candy graphics. Although still early in the game's development, Cryo has possibly created a new character that's hard

that his girlfriend, the sexy Lolita Globa, has been abducted by the nasty prince of darkness. His goal is to find her, but ahead are eight worlds full of danger where fighting, puzzle-solving, resourcefulness and even a touch of humour manifests itself.

Double Take

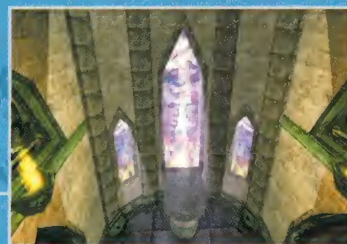
With so many games of this ilk, Cryo, who is developing this game in-house, has decided to go for a

YOU MAY SPOT REFERENCES TO LARA OR INDY JONES, GET AN IMAGE OF DRACULA OR FRANKENSTEIN

enough to please the gaming fans. Put in some top-notch graphics, where the 3D full-roaming environments add to the gameplay that traverses eight different worlds, each with its own graphic sets, and this game is set to look good.

Every game needs its backdrop story, and Gift is more than upset

parody of other games, a computer game about computer games. If you look closely, you see touches of other computer characters or even films which have been turned into games randomly dotted around the worlds, be they in a graphical form or a subtle hint. You may spot references to Lara Croft or Indy Jones, get an image of Dracula or Frankenstein. Hey, watch out for Lara Croft's shorts,



Gift

A Parody of the Real Thing

The seven levels are Titanic, Alcatraz, Star Stress, Drakuland, Iceland, Paztec and Mine of Horror. In these seven worlds are seven dwarfs, bosses in fact, each with their own attributes, like love, hate or lust. Each holds a clue to where your girlfriend is held. The other enemies are The Little Darks, or The Little Clears, and the big, big villain is The Dark Shadow of the obscure night.



or fangs from a cult hero. Trying to get your head around this is pretty easy; think platform-explore-walk-and-move-puzzle- action-thriller and you're getting close.

With the focus well and truly on the main character, Gift must have the right moves and looks to be appealing to play and create empathy. Cryo has done a lot of research into this genre of game, and although small, Gift is a well-animated character and works well. Of course, as you traverse through the worlds, you're able to collect

Publisher: Cryo Interactive • Developer: Cryo Interactive
Released: TBA • Genre: Platform/Adventure

GIFT



better weapons. Gift, being small, makes up for this weakness in the fact he's lithe, totally animated and is never still. If he falls over or does anything unusual, a number of well-animated frames are added to offer some extra humour. If he falls over, he rubs his bottom or scratches his head in embarrassment. He can certainly run and move at speed.

Other traits to learn include the ability to fly, jump, swim, climb, and Gift can even do death-defying leaps. The problem is that Gift is a bit of a show-off. As well as grabbing a special magic wand, water jets, cannons and a whole plethora of exciting weapons, there's plenty of teasing puzzles to solve in real-time, in exquisitely-constructed 3D worlds and not your boring shift-and-move ones. Pitfalls, devices and mazes, along with plenty of fighting against 'the little darks' who fear the light, or

conversely, stranger enemies who fear the dark. The clever ploy is if you see creatures who are afraid of the dark and you move in the light, they cannot see you. It's the same for the creatures who fear the light. Cryo compare the game to Heart of Darkness, a massive game in terms of wealth of characters, interaction and playability, also its appeal is to a mass market, particularly older users who might think cutesy games are for the younger audience.

Gift has many innovative features, not least the 3D engine that allows the user to manage the shadows and lighting within the game - strange one, that! Being able to change from third person view to first person perspective has been implemented to give more variety, and this is especially effective when you're using a weapon. Making use of a fireball to light up an area is a cool weapon, as Gift is not too keen on the dark, but this is time-limited.

Brains are Required

A spokesperson for Cryo expressed the view that the game is a mix of action and thought-provoking puzzles. Along with a new engine, the game offers a real challenge. Dialogue aids the player. "What we have done with Gift is to take some of the ingredients from games such as Crash Bandicoot and Tomb Raider, platforming meets action adventure, to create our own unique product. Gift offers lots of weapons, interaction and puzzles, to give a very polished product with cut scenes at the end of each level to give you some knowledge of what to expect in the next scene".





HELLBOY: DOGS OF THE NIGHT



Hellish

Hellboy places you in a mysterious and unnerving universe that summons up an ambience not too dissimilar to a mix of Edgar Allan Poe meets HP Lovecraft. It's a third-person game where you solve puzzles to open up new scenes to explore and fight.



A comic hero of classic proportions arriving shortly on the Dreamcast...

Hellboy, for the uninitiated, is a cult hero from Dark Horse comics, conceptualised and owned by cartoon artist Mike Mignola. Being one of the biggest comic strip-licensed heroes in the

US, he can be mentioned in the same breath as Batman, Superman, and The X-Men. Now Cryo, in conjunction with Dark Horse Interactive, is about to bring this cult hero to life in a real-time 3D action adventure game.

Hellboy, the character, has a

long history. As a baby demon he was summoned to Earth as the result of a Nazi experiment.

Eventually raised by the Bureau of Investigations in the US, he went on to become one of their finest sleuths. Hellboy is tougher than your average human, and over the years has faced many enemies. Unmistakably different with his red skin, tail and broken horns, he may look unusual but he's normal in most other ways. He acts like us mere mortals and tries to blend into society.

Cryo has brought in an American development team to

THE DARK FORCES OF EVIL ARE ABOUT TO BE UNLEASHED

code the game which is based on the comic strip character but is a new story conceptualised by the team in the US with a key member of Gamesquad team who worked on Asterix and Devil Inside. Although Mike Mignola is not involved in the actual design of the game, he has had some



HELLBOY: DOGS OF THE NIGHT



Fight the Force

Hellboy packs a mighty punch with his rock arm. He's a hero with a bad attitude who grunts and walks around just wanting to get things sorted, but as time evolves, he starts to acquire more and more human traits.



input, giving ideas. He will be shown the product for final approval, and has been commissioned to do the artwork for the box and packaging.

The game

The year is 1962 and once again the bureau has called up Hellboy to go and find some of his fellow agents. Along with his colleague Sarah, he sets off to Czechoslovakia. It's a simple task that

soon turns into a nightmare. Trapped in an Asylum with a fellow agent, the dark forces of evil are about to be unleashed. Creatures and ghosts are on the prowl, so not all is what it should be.

There's a mysterious force that's about to cause major mayhem. The fate of Hellboy and a myriad of problems is placed solely in the gameplayer's hands. Can you help

Hellboy stop strange and dastardly evil forces? Can you save his colleagues from a fate truly unthinkable? There's a long backdrop story set hundreds of years before these events that will soon become apparent to the user, but that can wait for the time being.

The quest takes you to some of the darkest, most perverse settings one could imagine. Demons, zombies and evil creatures are just some of the creatures out to get you. Settings are as varied and as diverse as the cast. These include a

cemetery frozen in time, a monastery, an abandoned mental institution and infested sewers where devilish creatures lurk.

The task ahead is fraught with many dangers and mysteries, supplying the ultimate test of your character, intelligence and dexterity in a game that feeds your worst nightmares. Cryo view this as an epic thriller that combines real-time combat with exploration in a rich and detailed environment, where gameplay moves between puzzles, combat and interaction.



loading

Publisher Eidos
Released September 2000

Developer Capcom
Genre Beat-'em-up

Power Stone 2

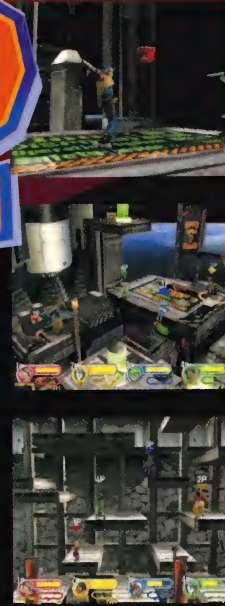
The one we've all been waiting for...



**exclusive
first look**



POWER STONE 2



Multi-platform fighting. Yes!

Being at the beck and call of a ruthless, cigar-chomping editor can be a thankless task. And whilst our veritable Mr Barnes may not completely fit the image, you can usually smell a shitty job coming a mile off. Therefore, imagine my surprise when, clearly in some form of rare jubilant mood, he pulled out a crisp file from his desk drawer with my latest orders and didn't display his usual sadistic pleasure in handing it my way. The reason? It had the words 'Power Stone 2' etched in the corner. And that's a signal for me to get very excited indeed.

We'll do the plot first, because it's easily the most tedious part of an otherwise-awesome-looking game. Set in the 19th Century in a time when superstitions were rife, a mysterious floating castle emerges to cast a big shadow of the world, under the watchful eye of the thuddingly-nasty Dr

Erode. The bastard. Oh, and he's captured all the Power Stone fighters too. Which is just an excuse to bring them all back for the sequel, of course...

DON'T BE FOOLED INTO THINKING PS2 IS JUST A MULTI-PLAYER AFFAIR...

On the game

And what a sequel it's turning out to be. The first thing to get us excited was the Multiplayer Mode. Those who played the original will surely be familiar with the sheer viciousness

offered, like ganging up and kicking the boss to bits, haven't left our minds since the day we learnt of this particular feature.



POWER STONE 2

it's got character!

As well as the eight original characters from the original Power Stone, the good news is that four new contestants are stepping up, bringing with them individual strengths and weaknesses. And here they are:

Gourmand:

Sounding not dissimilar to a certain Steven Segal movie, Gourmand is a cook, who happens to be very able as a fighter. He has the longest reach of all the fighters, thanks to his, er, knife and frying pan.



Aocall
Cuts the crap and is just willing to shoot you.

Peter
A dazzling name for a fighter, and he's a bit of a short-arse to boot. Still, he's quick and nippy, and very good at getting out of the way.

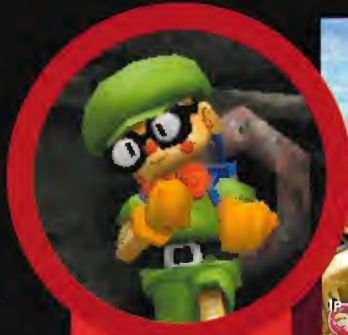
Julia:

The new-girl-in-town appears to be all timid, friendly and the kind of lass you'd take home to meet your mother. Who'd be shocked when she found out about Julia's airborne, umbrella-assisted violent attacks.



It looks like someone's playing off an unfair advantage...

loading



POWER STONE 2

stop the clock

Previously in Power Stone, when the clock ran out the player with the most energy was awarded the match by default. Not any more. Now when the timer ticks to zero, it's sudden death as a time challenge is introduced to increase the intensity. So that should sort out those who land one punch and then run and hide for the rest of the match.



■ It's thick and fast on this section, think you could handle it?

Furthermore, another major benefit of the original was the fact that you could interact with virtually anything. A table in the bar? Just pick it up and lug it at your opponent. A beam supporting the room? Either swing on it for momentum, or rip it out and whack the other fighter in the mush. Good, solid, wholesome family entertainment, and the good news is it gets even better, as you can do still more in the sequel. Hell, you can even run up the bloody walls if you want to, as well as command one of the three vehicles - tank, fort or aeroplane - for optimum damage potential.

One player

But don't get fooled into thinking that Power Stone 2 is purely a multiplayer affair. The Single-Player Mode in the original

YOU CAN EVEN RUN UP THE WALLS IF YOU WANT TO!

was no Soul Calibur, but certainly kept people off the streets for a while. Fortunately, though, they've raised the stakes for the sequel, with some interesting new developments promising to add extra spice to the single-player experience.

Thanks to the Adventure Mode, you take one fighter and aim to clobber your way through the various stages. Along the way, you need to pick up the various items and coins

carelessly scattered about the place, which you then take along to the item shop.

At first glance, the item shop is a fairly straightforward enterprise, allowing you to buy and sell various items in order to maximise your strengths. However, and here's the twist, you can also combine the items with ingredients cards and essence cards, which can then create completely new items.

The shopkeeper (and the more you talk to him, the more chance some strange goodies appear), in a way not unlike Boots the Chemists, advise you before you try some of



■ Instead of fighting in different arenas, they're all linked together in PS2...

POWER STONE 2

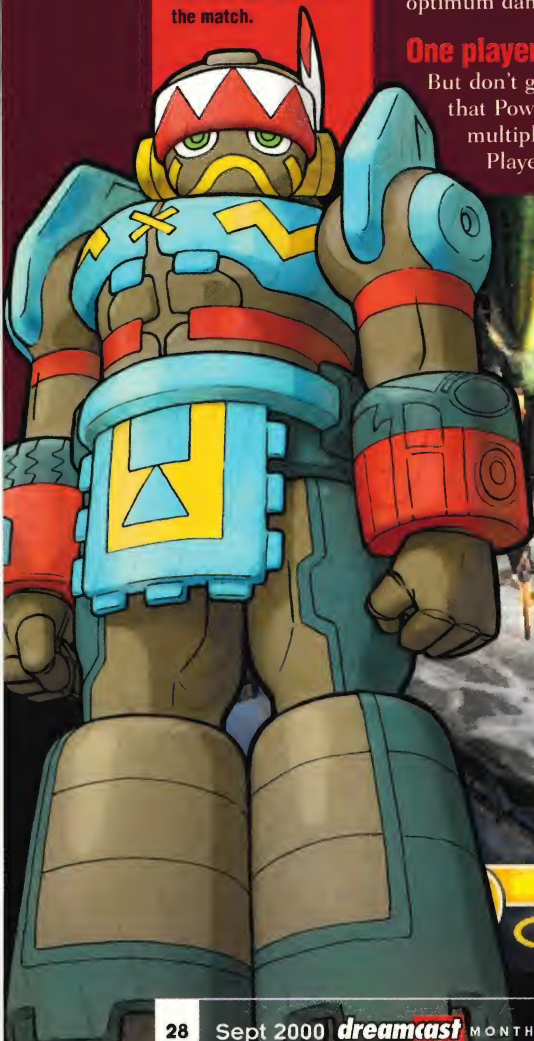
bad news

Just as Chu Chu Rocket gets us all excited at the prospect of online play, further disappointment lies waiting in the wings. The bottom line?

Power Stone 2 will not be playable across the internet, as apparently the game is simply too

sophisticated for the European system. Which is a bit of a sod if you ask us.

We'd like to do something other than heard mice for our online gaming delight, thank you very much.





POWER STONE 2

these things out, but do be warned that items won't always be successfully combined, so if it doesn't work, the game gives you a special ticket. Which you can use to play roulette. Or you can just get some decorating items and, er, dress up. We don't make these things up, you know.

Should you actually get bored of all this peripheral stuff, although we think it's that which gives the game the necessary extra substance, you can always return to the fighting. And when you do, you're treated to some gorgeous 3D graphics, two all-new bosses to fight and the chance to battle with over 60 different weapons.

We're not going to beat about the bush on Power Stone 2. This is arguably one of the most exciting games of the year on any format,

and amongst a Dreamcast schedule already bustling with must-have titles such as Samba di Amigo, Jet Grind Radio, Shenmue, Virtua Tennis and more, it already stands out as one of the titles right near the top of our list. And we've only got until September to wait. So whilst we're waiting, here's a suggestion for those folks at Capcom. Go and write a third one. Pretty-please!

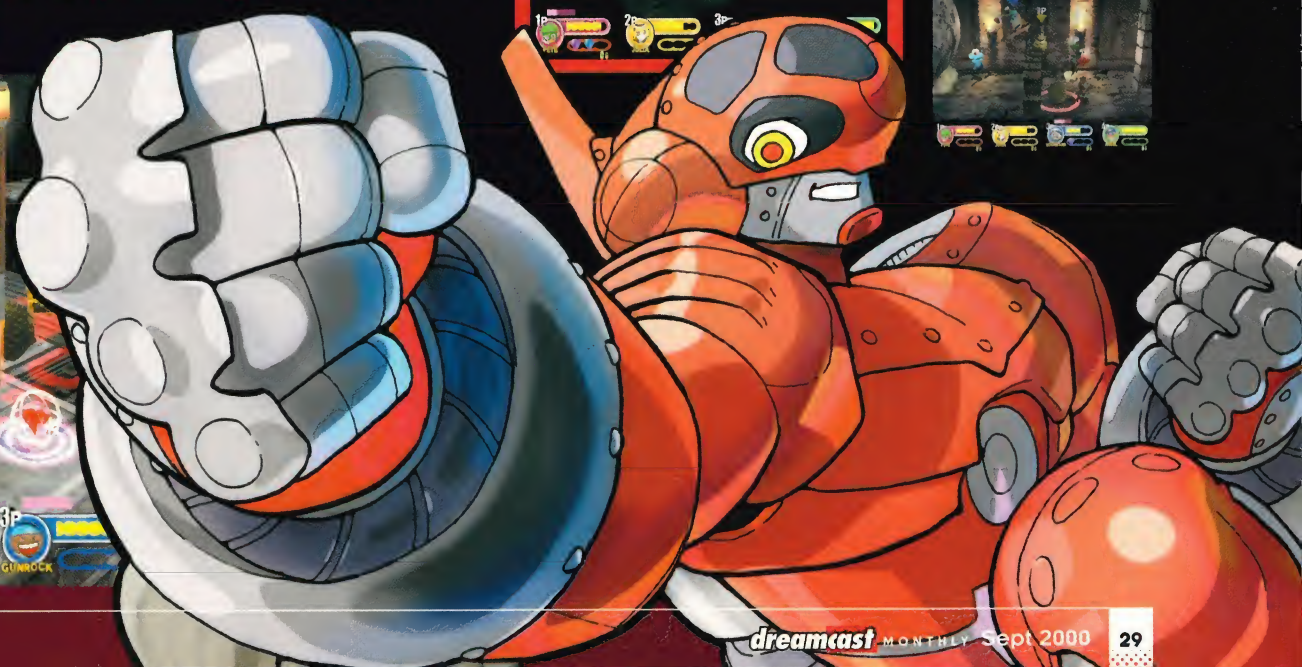
POWER STONE 2

collect the stones

As in the first game, you need to keep a constant watch for the various Power Stones that appear. Collect three at the same time, and you instantly become superpowered for a short period. This allows you to do some power fusion moves. They really kick arse, and you don't want to stand in the way.



TWO ALL-NEW BOSSES TO FIGHT AND THE CHANCE TO BATTLE WITH OVER 60 WEAPONS



| | | | |
|------------------|---------|------------------|--------------|
| Publisher | Konami | Developer | Konami |
| Released | Q4 2000 | Genre | Shoot-'em-up |



Silent Scope



■ 'Information of the enemies'? Call the grammar police...

Left a bit, right a bit, fire! Bugger, he moved...

Silent Scope hits the Dreamcast straight from the arcade, but without the fancy laser-sight rifle. The console version is already looking impressive, however, and although not officially ear-marked for the UK, we're certain we'll see it over here by the end of the year.

game from purpose-built arcade hardware could prove a problem, but from what we've seen, this game is looking pretty cool.

A class act

The basic story outline sees you as an elite sniper who must rescue the President and his daughter. Before

A GAME THAT BRINGS A WHOLE NEW CONCEPT TO THE DREAMCAST

Fancy being a sniper hit-man who fears no one? Have you got nerves of steel, with hands free from shakes and jitters? If so, Silent Scope could well be the sharpshooter for you. Converting a

you can achieve this, you must take out plenty of those bad guys, and as usual, the game's laced with a few surprises, but we won't divulge them – that would really spoil things.

Now your average shooting game

SILENT SCOPE

mission brief!

Your mission takes you through traumatic and challenging locations, including skyscrapers, hotels, stadia and a host more in your search for the enemy's base. Storm select locations with your choice of helicopter or ground infiltration. Certain areas require day-into-night terrorist tracking, so you're equipped with a night vision scope. Be prepared and be warned – only the best can survive!

would merely place a crosshair on screen for you to pinpoint the target, but Silent Scope uses a telescopic sight, so the image within the crosshair is enlarged. Coupled with some clever effects, this really makes for a game with style. Anyone who says Silent Scope just won't work on a Dreamcast could be eating their words, or to put it another way, you could end up



Now that's what I call big game hunting. Makes a change from shooting alligators...



biting the bullet! With clever use of the controls, Silent Scope mirrors the arcade machine pretty well. Guide the sight to the location on

and the President's in the stadium.

speed matter most. Taking out a helicopter as well as a person is great fun, and sitting near a highway and waiting for a car to pinpoint is far from easy. On-screen information gives the game instant appeal, as does the fact that you're also a target, and so you only have a certain number of lives to play with.

Graphically, the game's impressive on the eye, with great attention to the smallest details, be you indoors

or out. The polygon count on screen is massive. Some say this is actually better than the arcade machine, which is incredible. The Dreamcast has great texturing, something that was lacking on the coin-op.

Silent Scope comes with the original Story and Time Attack Modes, and word has it they could even add extra ones in the form of Night Vision, plus the professional options for the meanest of shooters. Even as we write, new levels are being added, along with a host of shooting galleries to really give you a rush. Getting info from the Konami guys is tough, but we shall be tracking this game, and (dare we say it) may even hire our own hit-man!



PINPOINT SHOOTING IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY

the screen you want to fire at. Once you have it where you want it, take your finger off one of the buttons and the screen locks onto the target and the sniper sight enlarges, giving you a better view. It's just like the coin-op. You even have options to resize the sight way up to a full screen, plus there are a few advanced options so you can actually gauge the view better with two eyes; needless to say, it works!

Locations and objectives are varied, although pinpoint shooting is the order of the day. Time and



Does this remind anyone of the Kennedy assassination?

Publisher Sega
Released Q4 2000

Developer Sega
Genre Dance

Space Channel 5

Groove evening viewers!

SPACE CHANNEL 5

gotta catch 'em all!

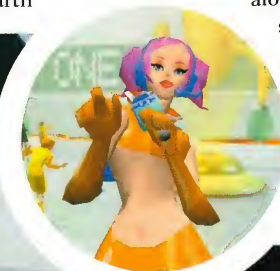


Though there are only four separate levels, there's a vast array of characters to save on your journey. They can't all be saved in one go, so when you return to the game after first completing it, you're treated to extra sections that give you the chance to rescue other characters who can then be viewed in all their glory with accompanying bios and statistics.



Space Channel 5 is a dance game unlike any you might have seen before. It's set in a distant (and funky) future, where you play the role of Ulala, Space Channel 5's leading news reporter. You're sent out on a story by the company's shadowy MD, Mr Blank, only to find marauding aliens attacking the Earth

and brainwashing everyone they meet to make them dance! A little far-fetched? Maybe. Somewhat comical? Absolutely. So it's a little weird, but it's from Sega of Japan, so what did you expect? Luckily, the game is geared towards the more adult end of the dance and music genre, so expect some particularly 'daring' dance steps along with more than your fair share of skimpy outfits and gratuitous knicker shots! 'Sexy' must have been a key word during the production of the game, and there's no reason why you should doubt Sega has delivered the goods.



■ Even the Space Channel 5 ship is funky!



Left, Left, Shoot!

There are two tiers of gameplay in Space Channel 5, both based around the tried-and-tested method of 'Simon Says' gameplay. The first you encounter at the very start of the game is what we effectively call the 'Dance-off'. You're challenged by a number of the alien Morolians (surely, Telly Tubbies in Japanese!) to reproduce their dance steps in time to the funky tune using the four main directions of the digital pad along with a shoot button (though in Dance Off, no shooting is actually done). In the top-left corner of the screen a number of love hearts show how many mistakes you can afford to make. Should you complete their dance routine without losing all your hearts, you beat them and the character they're harbouring is free to join you on your way through the level. The other tier of gameplay is the Shoot-Out, where you're challenged by Morolians to a gunfight. Follow their moves accurately and

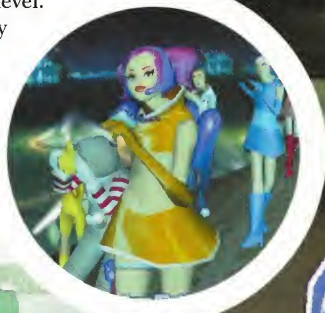
you send them packing. Fail and your chance of finishing the level significantly decreases.

Bums on Seats

The biggest gameplay factor behind Space Channel 5 is the percentage 'viewing rating' that is permanently situated in the bottom-right-hand corner of the screen. Your performance in the game is directly proportional to the viewing figures, so

if you're doing well, it goes up, but if you're doing badly it drops and your show gets taken off the air. Your rating has to be over a certain point to reach the next level, though once you've already completed the game, it still carries on from the percentage you previously finished the game at.

Make no mistake, Space Channel 5 is going to be a huge game. See the review here first next issue, but enjoy these lovely pictures until then...



■ She's hot, she's got the moves and we're in love...



THE GAME IS GEARED TOWARDS THE MORE ADULT END OF THE DANCE AND MUSIC GENRE



For all those people who spend an age in the loft with whistle in hand and wearing a peaked cap, or spend ages on the end of the platform at London

Waterloo, this one's dedicated to you. It's time to put aside your days of trainspotting and laying tracks in that attic, as one of the most addictive and playable strategy and empire building games steams onto the Dreamcast platform this summer. But first a very brief history lesson.

Back in 1991, Sid Meier designed a modest game for MicroProse entitled *Railroad Tycoon*. It was one of the first real-time strategy games. There wasn't any combat, just a cut-throat, non-stop battle to build a railroad empire. With ruthless AI and engaging gameplay, it became a classic. Fast-forward to late 1998: Hasbro bought MicroProse, Sid Meier has a new company called Firaxis, and PopTop Software develops a sequel, *Railroad Tycoon II*.

Anyone who played the original will feel instantly at home with *Railroad Tycoon II*. The essentials of the game are largely unchanged. Players must construct railroad lines between cities and industries, buy trains and schedule the movement of people and goods in order to generate income and

Railroad Tycoon II

The train now arriving at Platform Two...



■ What's this? The Millennium Dome in miniature?



Mind the Doors

Construct the Pennsylvania Railroad through the Appalachians, connect New York to Los Angeles using futuristic, magnetically-levitating transcontinental railroads, and rekindle Scottish pride by laying the tracks for the Flying Scotsman from Edinburgh to London. Don't forget the high-speed Channel Tunnel link either:

at least it might get finished with you in charge.

Railroad Tycoon II presents you with world catastrophes such as World War II, the Cold War and global warming, alongside modern problems associated with mass transit. It starts off as a 'look at that' view from the carriage window and expands into a 'did you see that' blurred picture.



THIS IS ONE RAILWAY NETWORK THAT DR BEECHING WON'T BE ABLE TO GET HIS HANDS ON

method of play that's a lot of fun, and really allows you to learn the finer points of the game at your own pace. Leaves on the line won't delay your trains either. The 70 scenarios are a mix of originals, The Second Century PC add-on and ones designed exclusively for Dreamcast.

Railroad Tycoon II can take you from New York to South Africa and



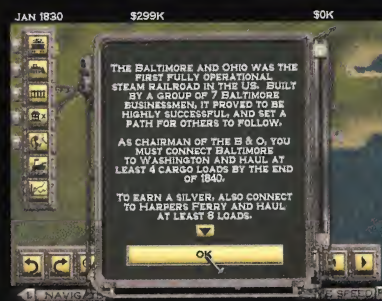
establish your transportation empires while outmanoeuvring fellow robber barons. Even playing by yourself without any AI (Artificial Intelligence) or human opponents, Railroad Tycoon II seems to have that 'I'll just play a little while longer' quality that's the hallmark of a successful design.

The game spans the time period from 1800 to 2000, and features more than 60 locomotives (primitive coal-burners to the sleek Eurostar and Brenner 412) and over 40 types of cargo to pull (from wood to weapons and some, how shall I put it, 'questionable' items). In each time period and in different maps there are unique cargoes. What industries and locations accept a particular cargo also varies with time. For example, prior to 1900 cities accept oil and will pay you handsomely for it. After that time they won't accept it; you must refine it into diesel and then take it to a power plant! If you don't want to deal with this complexity, you can set the economy on its simplest setting.

All Aboard!

Railroad Tycoon II has a wealth of play features. In addition to single scenarios, you'll find a Campaign Mode, which links scenarios together

in a semi-historical manner. Maps are based on the real world, taken from actual US Geographic satellite data, and include North America, Eastern and Western USA, Great Britain, Europe, and much more. The maps are very realistic-looking and feature accurate 3D-terrain modelling, and have free-roaming environments thanks to an all-new full 3D engine. The scenarios contain AI opponents that are based on historical figures. One of the best features is the 'sandbox' option. In this mode, you build your empire with all options available to you without having to worry about money, competition or stocks. You can even manipulate terrain and add trees and such to the landscape. It's a freestyle



loading



RAILROAD TYCOON II

Mind Your Business

Delight in the unstoppable power of newly-designed engines like the French TGV, DB 18-201, Eurostar, and the Brenner 412. Those contemplating smuggling questionable goods can outfit their lines with the necessary cars to carry them. Troop transports, weapon-hauling flatbeds, Metra passenger cars, ammunition carriers and alcohol containers could become an integral part of your business.



■ Connect towns, make a profit, stop because of leaves on the line...

all stations in between. It can take you from a penniless manual labourer to an all-powerful multi-millionaire. It can take you from a normal, well-adjusted, well-rounded person to an obsessed, singled-minded, one-tracked anorak (we don't mean to be disparaging here, folks). This is a real railroad game, not just a strategy game that happens to involve railroads. If you want to hop on a plane, car or ship, you have to go elsewhere. This game is about trains, and is for people who love trains. Everything about the game is centred around an authentic look and feeling of the railways.

RAILROAD TYCOON II CAN TAKE YOU FROM NEW YORK TO SOUTH AFRICA AND ALL STATIONS IN BETWEEN

This authenticity is maintained in each period with videos and pictures interlaced throughout the game. The design and interface are true to the character of the fabled late 1800s railroads, although the one concession to modernity is the incorporation of support for the Dreamcast mouse. Oh, and an online

capability allowing you to take up the empire-building challenge one-on-one with others.

Tickets Please!

Scenarios have fixed victory conditions, such as generating \$25 million in net worth before a certain time or connecting two cities together. This is in some contrast to the original game, where the goal was simply to build and generate value in your railroad. Another



■ July, 1899 – by British Rail standards, it should be arriving around now.



change is that the player is now independent from the railroad he initially controls. Players can found multiple railroads, buy and sell stock in their own and AI railroads and generally behave like those robber barons of old. The financial model is quite sophisticated, with short-selling, margin plays and calls, bonds, dividends, and mergers. If that gets you gibbering, remember the aforementioned 'sandbox' mode.

Difficulty levels allow you to choose how sophisticated the virtual economy is as well as the financial model. Players can also play against one or more AI railroad tycoons. For the strategy gamer who thinks this genre is defined only by real-time combat games like Starcraft or Total Annihilation, the lack of unit construction, resource gathering and fast-paced combat may come as a bit of a surprise. However, this game is no less absorbing for the lack of blood and gore. It takes planning and careful execution to

able to get his hands on!

The actual game visuals are pretty damn good, being very detailed and viewable from several different zoom settings. Animations are wonderful, with smoke coming from factories, laundry flapping in the wind on clotheslines near houses, and of course, the trains belching smoke and steam as they make their way along the tracks. You also hear the trains chuffing along, the sounds of sawmills or other factories working, and the 'cha-ching' of the cash register as a train pulls into the station. It's all so smooth and detailed it almost looks like a model railroad, which is where we came in.

Tremor Entertainment has taken Pop Top Software's PC title and enhanced it considerably. The interface is easy and intuitive to use, and a grand job has been done not to offer a mere PC port. RTT2 promises to pull you into its world of an era long since past, to a future whose details are not even foreseeable.



RAILROAD TYCOON II SEEMS TO HAVE THAT 'I'LL JUST PLAY A LITTLE WHILE LONGER' QUALITY THAT'S THE HALLMARK OF A SUCCESSFUL DESIGN

succeed even against the AI, and crushing the other players on your way to financial success looks like it should be loads of fun. This is one railway network that Dr Beeching won't be



Aero Wings 2:

Airstrike

AERO WINGS 2

real cool

Aero Wings 2 allows flight enthusiasts to sit back in the comfort of their couch and battle it out on a large TV. This is going to appeal to a more serious gamer. Those who want their games to be a representation of real life – it's all here. Those who have the patience to learn to fly the jets on offer get the same quick-twitch rush that typically comes from car games and beat-'em-ups.



Taking the DC to New Heights



Try to name a dozen half-decent flying-cum-sim games on any console, let alone the Dreamcast, and you struggle, but Aero Wings 2 looks set to appease all those that love plane games offering exhilaration in the sky plus a little extra!



What You Get!

Aero Wings 2 features four modes: Fighter Pilot, Tactical Challenge, Free Flight, Versus and Training. The Fighter Pilot Mode, offering 30 missions, is your route to the top, from lowly cadet to Top

Gun ace. Tasks range from airborne stunts and tactical training to adrenaline-pumping weapons training. After you've trained in the Fighter Pilot Mode, you can test yourself in the game's 15 tactical challenges, which is tough! You need good hand/eye co-ordination, and plenty of nerve as you engage ace pilots in dogfights through dangerous low-altitude or low-visibility combat situations. The Free Flight Mode lets you create your own scenario by giving you a choice of arena, weather, and number of opponents. Finally, the Versus Mode lets you and a friend slug it out. The training missions may appear a little challenging, but once the player gets past them, he has the skills to go

AIRBORNE STUNTS AND TACTICAL TRAINING TO ADRENALINE-PUMPING WEAPONS TRAINING



One-on-one combat action is catered for – if you can read the instructions!





head to head with anyone. The mission briefings are all offered as you start each mission, so the player knows exactly what is required!

Plane Facts

There's 25 aircraft on offer, with a range of Japanese fighters and US jets, such as the F-1, F-16, F-14E and F-86F. There's sure to be an aeroplane to suit every fancy. Each plane is modelled on its real-world counterpart. The planes can't be customised, but as you progress, you may win a similar jet with afterburners or a different paint job. The weather plays a factor, and affects your ability to see your opponent. Planes need to be much closer before they can engage in battles. As for plane damage, it depends on the plane; getting hit in the wings reduces your manoeuvrability and a blast in the rear sets the engine on fire and loses fuel – finish your mission quickly. Pick the view that's best for you, from over 12 in-game camera angles and whopping 20 camera angles in the cinematic Replay Theatre!

Life In Your Hands

The Dreamcast controller is a little short on buttons, so the team had to map multiple features to a single

button, or automate them. But they didn't cut features, just made the controls a little simpler and more intuitive for

the average gamer. One could argue players should have control over individual flaps, air brakes and gears, but they found that this micromanagement just got in the way of the fun of flying the plane in battle.

The Man From Crave

The game's producer, Daryl Pitts, was on hand to add his thoughts. "In Aero Wings 2 we have everything a hit videogame needs for those willing to try! On a Dreamcast, the experience on offer is much more comfortable and intense, and thus more lifelike. The physics model is ideal, and the planes are drawn marvellously. You may say, 'sim on DC?' Well this is

an untapped market. With the huge online potential of the DC, it would be a shame not to do a few more versions of this game. Experts were employed to consult on the battle and training strategies within the game, so our air battles are as realistic as possible. Since there was already a prequel, Aero Wings 1, where all the core technology was created, Aero Wings 2 was completed in less than a year".



■ Have you got what it takes to be the Top Gun (crappy cliché ahoy)?



Chicken Run

Can our feathered friends follow in the footsteps of stablemates Wallace & Gromit? Let's see if they can pull off this coup (ouch - Ed)...

What came first, the chicken or the egg? Some might argue it was the cockerel, but Oscar-winning

animators Aardman Animations doesn't concern itself with this in its latest movie, *Chicken Run*. Nor does Eidos in the Dreamcast spin-off...

The game, like the film, is set in a 1950s chicken farm in deepest Yorkshire.

Trapped behind barbed wire and fearing for their very lives, the coup is like a concentration camp for the hapless birds, which is a shame — they're soooooo cute!

Not content with a life of laying eggs for the farmer, the chickens decide to break free. The player must help Ginger, the chief hen voiced by Julia Sawalha in the flick, lead her host of

hapless hens over the fence and away to freedom. Beware of Mr and Mrs Tweedy, the hungry chicken farmers who are hell-bent on putting you into pies. Bernard Matthews and Colonel Sanders have nothing on them...

Hen-Peked

The game is fully 3D (no surprises there), and the developers, Blitz Games (formerly Interactive Studios of WarGames fame) claim the world and environments accurately portray what you see in the film. The emphasis is on stealth as you creep around looking for the objects needed to break out of the coup. There are four characters to control; Ginger, the American rooster Rocky (no doubt overpaid, oversexed and over here), and the friendly rats Nick and Fetcher. The tasks are non-linear, and can be completed in any order. Look out for seven unique sub-

games too, including catapulting chickens into a nearby lake, strapping them to fireworks and launching them over a fence on a see-saw.

Aardman Animations' Peter Lord and Nick Park, creators and co-directors of *Chicken Run* the movie, said, "We are very excited to see our characters developed for the Dreamcast. It's another step forward for the chickens and the studio".



| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|------------------|---------|
| Publisher | Capcom/VIE | Developer | Psikyo |
| Released | October 2000 | Genre | Shooter |



Gun Bird 2

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Or is it another turkey?

Strange though it may seem, shoot-'em-ups on the Dreamcast are few and far between. Gun Bird 2 is a traditional 2D vertically-scrolling blaster that's been faithfully ported from its sister arcade machine. But 2D games – aren't they old hat? Sure, but seeing there are so few games of this ilk on the Dreamcast, and we're reliably informed that Japanese developer Psikyo is doing a grand job, this could well turn out to be more than interesting. This ain't your usual shooter in space, but one with a weird and wonderful cast in some very interesting locations, as well as endless finger-trigger mayhem.

OK, graphically there's nothing to shout about. No ground-breaking looks, then, but the game does have some interesting features. Gun Bird 2 conjures up hours of non-stop, top-down, addictive shooting action, along with an inventive storyline with numerous levels. There are seven extremely unique stages, which have multiple endings through various story branches. The player is placed on a quest for the magical ingredients to produce the legendary 'All-Purpose Medicine'. Along the way, you must face evil pirates who hope to stop you and nab it themselves.

Allow me to Present...

Gun Bird 2 also introduces six new characters, including Marion, Alucard, Tavia, Valpiro, Hei-Cob, Aine. It offers a special appearance by the ever-popular Morrigan from the Darkstalkers series (exclusive to the Dreamcast version). With seven selectable characters, the player can choose to dart through the skies solo or grab an aid to give a helping hand as you bombard the enemy whilst also nabbing some dosh! Each of the

characters has its own unique personality, and they're plagued with their own set of problems, which only the 'All-Purpose Medicine' can cure. To find the medicine, players must first locate the Fragment of Sun, Whisper of Star and the Dew of Moon, each one a key ingredient of the legendary potion.

However, there is one problem; as mentioned, three vicious pirates also want these ingredients for their own personal use.

Go Forth and Get 'Em!

The thrusts of any half-decent shooter are the attack methods and the firepower, and Gun Bird 2 is not lacking in either. As an example of the arsenal on hand, take the Charge Shot, where the player can release a



powerful attack by holding down the shoot button and releasing. The Bomb is wicked and allows the player to erase all enemy bullets on-screen (each character has a unique way of doing this). Needless to say, there are plenty more.

Gun Bird 2 offers numerous modes of play. Original Mode is a wide-screen, vertical-scrolling game balanced specifically for the Sega Dreamcast. Original Two Mode is a wide-screen, vertical-scrolling game that adds a spontaneous scroll if a character moves up or down. Arcade Mode offers an arcade-perfect screen, slanted at a 90-degree angle. Gallery Mode allows players to view artwork and character bios. The game also features Internet support, with downloads and high-score ranking online.



| | | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------------|--------|
| Publisher | Acclaim | Developer | ATD |
| Released | November 2000 | Genre | Racing |



Bologna-based Ducati is seen by many (if not all) motorbike fans as the Ferrari of two wheels, a name that ensures the leather-clad set get all misty-eyed as well as a little excited. Attention to Detail has tapped into this following by developing a title that isn't just another superbike game, more a product on the Ducati lifestyle.

Ducati Life is split into two distinct modes. Quick Race is a standard arcade progression where you select a bike, win the race, earn another bike for another track, and so on. There are constant rewards to keep you interested. The second is the Ducati Lifestyle Mode. This mode starts you off with an amount of cash with which to buy a bike and upgrades. An event is entered (anything from a single race to a series of eight), and if you win it, the

monetary rewards are used to purchase another Ducati and more upgrades. Obviously it's more involved than this, but that's the basis of Ducati Life.

One more way of gaining bikes is by winning them in a challenge. Racing for pink slips is a better phrase, because it means if you go one-on-one against the console and win, you get to keep the other bike. This is also the case if you take your bike to a friend's house and play against them. If you lose, however, your VMU returns empty.

Hell for Leather

This upgrade business is standard in racing games, but where



DUCATI LIFE

Two-Wheeled Stars

Whilst Mike Halewood and Carl Fogarty's personalised bikes are in the game and you'll be able to race against them, they themselves appear in name only.



|| DUCATI IS SEEN BY MANY AS THE FERRARI OF TWO-WHEELED RACING

Ducati Life

Is that a throbbing monster between your legs?

exclusive



Life looks much more peaceful up there...

Ducati Life hopes to stand out from the crowd in some of the more unusual ones. The leather riding suits and helmets aren't just there for show; they make a difference to your performance. The more expensive the helmet, the quicker you get back on your bike, and better quality leathers allow you to scrape along walls longer

THEY'VE SUPPLIED TELEMETRY DATA AS WELL AS A superbike ENGINEER, ONE CORRADO CECCHINELLI

before falling off. Everything has a gameplay element to it. If you've spent a lot of money on your bike, helmet and leathers, ATD want you to believe it's yours.

Whilst Ducati Life has bikes from the last five decades, don't be fooled into thinking it's akin to something



for two very good reasons. According to ATD, everyone has already raced around Silverstone, Imola, Monaco, Donnington and the rest, and these real ones tend to be flat and somewhat boring (and no doubt expensive to license). Ducati Life includes plenty of hills for interesting racing as well as trackside features to convey a sense of speed. Eight courses (16 really, because each one is raced in reverse as well) may not seem many when 15 or more is

like Porsche Challenge. It isn't, it's about today. From the humble Cucciolo that topped out at a sedate 40mph to the MH900e, a beast with slingshot speed, all the bikes are raced within a 21st Century setting. The eight tracks that make up the game, whilst being modern, are also fictional

DUCATI LIFE

The Five Ducati Bike Showrooms

Classic

Purchase the classic Ducati bikes. These are quite expensive pristine examples of Ducati bikes from the 50s to the present day.

Ducati

For the more modern Ducati bikes. These will be quite expensive brand-new examples from the present range.



Used Bikes (Trader 1)

Buy second-hand Ducatis. They're less expensive examples from 70s through to the 90s, excluding the present range. Each trader has at least one prime example of each model.



Used Bikes (Trader 2)

Similar to Trader One but with a different price structure and range. Prices change over time.

Used Bikes (Trader 3)

Similar to Trader One, but with a different price structure and range. Prices change over time. Each Trader has a distinctly different styling to each other to encourage familiarity.





■ Makes you queasy just looking at it, doesn't it?

DUCATI

DUCATI LIFE

Nothing Vague About Hage...

According to Andrew Hage, Ducati programmer, "The lead format for Ducati Life is PlayStation; it's the lowest common denominator. We're pushing what we can on PlayStation and they [the Dreamcast programmers] expand everything for that machine. Because of the Dreamcast's specifications, you can basically add in what you want. It's the way it should be done; you don't try to squeeze something into a smaller format".



standard, but it's far easier to familiarise yourself with each, which is one of the main reasons for this low number. However, a lack of courses doesn't necessarily mean a short game. The Single Race Mode can stretch from a solitary lap up to a mind-boggling 95! With a decent average of 90 seconds per lap, you're looking at an hour and a half of constant racing.

Back to the game itself. The first mode has you up against four other racers with two 'progressions', each showing the tracks and bikes used and those which are still to be opened. The

second 'progression' (playing it all in reverse) isn't available until you've raced the right way round. One thing implemented that appears unusual is negative rewards. If you fail miserably, you're awarded the Cucciolo. If you simply fancy blowing away the cobwebs, you can go for a Time Attack where you attempt to beat the record time for a particular track. Needless to say, the Quick Race event will have a two-player split screen mode.

The more involved second mode, Lifestyle, offers the single player a pseudo-realistic simulation of the Ducati bike range throughout the

history of the company. Split into 11 sections, this single-player campaign consists of five showrooms where you can buy your bikes, a Ducati museum where you can see the whole range of machines, a Ducati shop so you can buy those fancy leathers, a parts workshop to get your upgrades, a garage where you can get information about your equipment, the obvious race and the very important licence testing. This last part is where you have to take a test in order to gain four licences to enter the more prestigious and valuable races.

Motorbikin'

It's strange that the racing genre is saturated with those using cars as their focal point, but games with bikes making up a tiny percentage. Apart from Suzuki Alstare, the Dreamcast has no two-wheel racers. In fact, the whole games industry is lacking in these. Why? Firstly, everyone has been in a car and therefore knows what it's like, but far fewer have experienced riding a motorbike. It's also notoriously difficult to develop a bike game that feels the part. The steering and leaning are two distinct mechanisms that are very hard to get correct. Below a certain speed, steering is needed, but above that speed, the leaning comes into play, although it's possible to tip over. Complex equations abound! Getting the player to think they're

IF YOU SPEND MONEY ON YOUR BIKE, LEATHERS AND HELMET, ATD WANT YOU TO BELIEVE IT'S YOURS





■ Scrape the walls and the quality of your leathers helps.



inches from the ground when cornering is another factor that needs to be perfect to give the feel of actually being on a bike.

How does a game developer manage to get the physics of bikes like these right? After all, they have to handle correctly. This is where Ducati themselves come in. Apart from giving the licence, they've supplied telemetry data as well as a superbike engineer, one Corrado Cecchinelli. The only hands-on experience ATD had was in the use of a 916 that they rode to record the engine sounds.

Another problem faced by ATD was trying to get the racing balanced. To this end, you can only race against bikes from the same era, except in one-off special events. For one-off read 'tortoise and hare', as there's a single-lap race which pits a Cucciolo against the mighty

MH900e. It isn't the forgone conclusion one might expect though. The Cucciolo takes bends with ease and you never crash, whereas the MH900e is difficult to handle even along the straights. It may very well leave your innards behind with its acceleration, but you're trying to get back on at the first turn.

To give some semblance of fairness, Ducati Life is split into two distinct racing camps. The events are contested with bikes that either have similar specifications, or ones that come from the same era. The special events aren't included in this. Another of these special events is when the race is full of the same bikes, be they Daytona 250s, Bialbero 125s or whatever.

As with nearly all racing games that use licensed machines,

there's no damage to the bikes. Not only would damaged bikes be detrimental to Ducati's image, but also the game itself would lose its sense of progression. Wear and tear means having to repair things, which means the game suffers accordingly. It may happen in real life, but this is a game. What does have an effect on your bike is the tuning aspect. As well as having a multitude of upgrades such as brake linings, clutch, exhausts, pistons, tyres, etc, you can fine-tune elements like suspension and gear ratios. This isn't as painful as it sounds because it's all done in an arcade manner, using sliders to change values. Arcade it may be, but it's accurate as well.

Ducati Life is about racing, but within that comes a certain amount of management, if only at the beginning of the game. The quandary is whether to buy a cheaper bike and then go for some upgrades, or get the best one your pocket can stand. The decision is yours, but make it count...

DUCATI LIFE

There are 44 bikes all together. Read 'em and weep, boys...

Cucciolo
Gransport 100
Gransport 125
Bialbero 125
175 F3
Daytona 250
Daytona 350
500GP Imola
500GP
Mach1
900ss
900ss GP Special
TT1 F1
Mille S2
NCR900
750 Paso
900 Paso
TT2 F1
851 Strada
888
Supermono
Monster 600 Dark
Monster 600
Monster 750 Dark
Monster 750
Monster 900 Dark
Monster 900
Monster 900 Cromo
Monster City
Monster 900s
St2
St4
Supersport 750 half-faired
Supersport 750 full-faired
Supersport 900 half-faired
Supersport 900 full-faired
748
748R
748SPS
996
996R
996SPS
Carls 996
MH900e



Publisher THQ
Released October 2000

Developer Yukes
Genre Sport Sim

WWF Royal Rumble

Let's get ready to rumble!



■ My, what an impressive swimsuit you have...



WWF ROYAL RUMBLE

In the Mode

There's a great list of modes of play, and one new innovation is the 'partner interface' system. Basically, and believe me it is a tad more complex than this, you're allowed to choose some outside assistance, a partner wrestler. Via a few key presses, in a flash special moves can be set up, and once you hit the right button, you hear a whistle, a rescue call which has your partner in the ring lending you a hand or foot.



Strangely for a sport that doesn't have many half-decent British competitors, wrestling titles do remarkably well in the UK and are also top sellers globally. What, you may ask, makes it so popular? Could it be the Yanks have turned a sport into a drama, with outrageous acting and antics so you just can't believe what

Yukes, the creator and developer of the top-selling WWF SmackDown! on the PSX, makes its debut on the Dreamcast. And a better-looking game you will not see. Glance at it and you could believe you're watching the TV show, but here you have full control over any of 20 top wrestlers from the WWF stable. It's probably because the game is based on the Sega arcade

WWF ROYAL RUMBLE OFFERS THE LOT, THEN IT GIVES YOU EVEN MORE

you see? Maybe the bulging muscles and good-looking dudes give it the appeal. Nah! It's just good, old-fashioned fun! WWF Royal Rumble offers the lot, and then it gives you even more.

machine that this is so good, for the developer has effortlessly made a mirror copy, making this one hell of a port. The muscle and skin tones and the actual faces have all been digitised, and are very impressive. At

no time does the perennial problem of wooden wrestlers manifest itself. Animation is slick, and the moves on hand test not only the player's skill but also your controller.

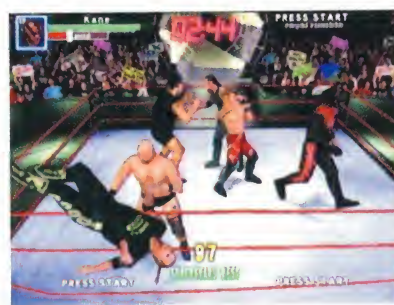
It must be said straight away that WWF Royal Rumble is somewhat over the top, but would you expect less? With the usual pitched battles outside the ring, in the dressing room and a number of other locations that come as a surprise, it all adds to the excitement and frenzy on offer.

The Real McCoy

WWF, WCW, ECW: there are a number of wrestling associations, but it now appears the WWF is the big one again. You take on the role of The Rock, Steve Austin, Triple H, The Undertaker and Riskish Phatu, but where's good old Hulk gone? [WCW - Ed]. All have their own great signature moves that really elevate this to a league of its own. Royal Rumble Mode is utter



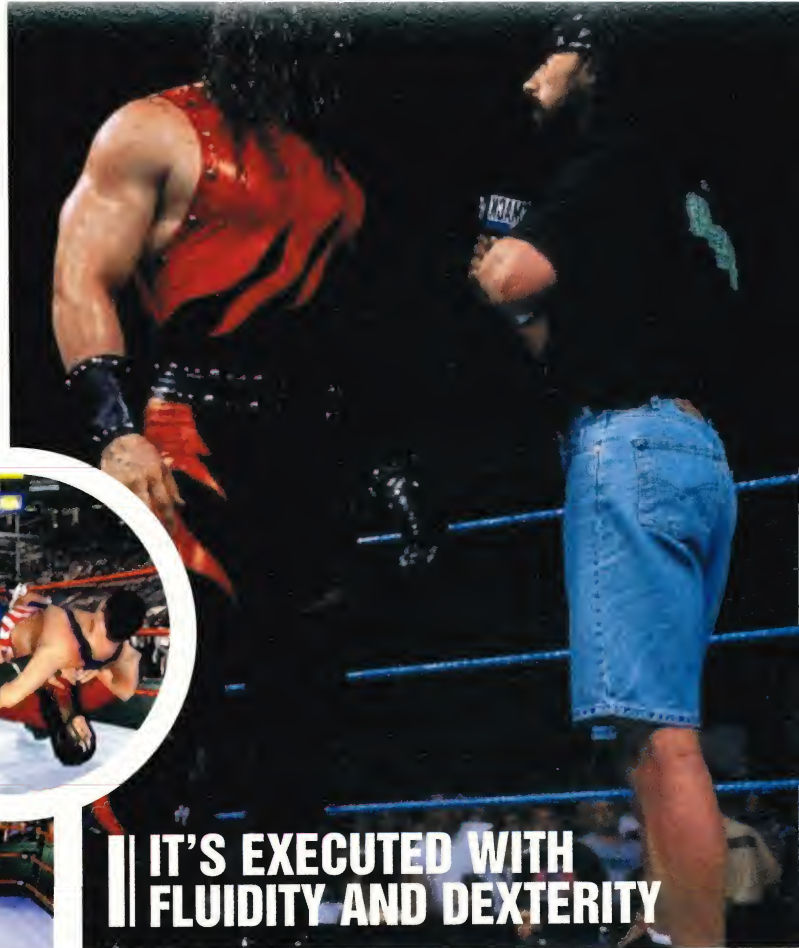
Two of the WWF's finest get (over) friendly in the ring — don't tell 'em we said that!



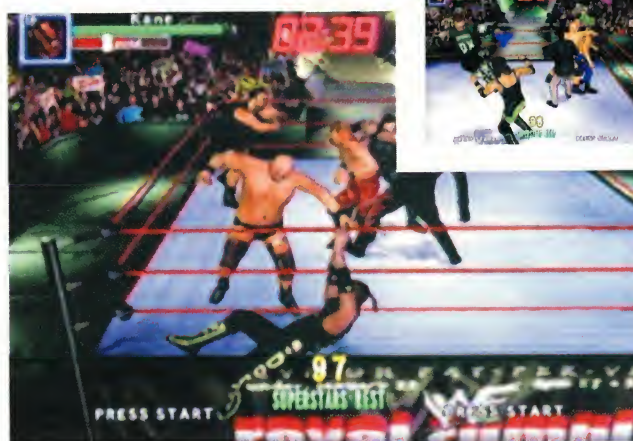
mayhem! Up to nine wrestlers can be in the ring at any one time, and these huge beefcakes fill the screen; they're enormous! OK, there are some real hardcore wrestling fans out there, so grease up your fingers, for you need to tap on a variety of buttons to get the right moves. Look out for double suplexes and character-specific moves, such as Kane's chokeslam and Mankind's mandible claw, not forgetting a gambit of cheating and outrageous action, like using up chairs and weapons. It's executed with fluidity and dexterity too.



As Lloyd Grossman would say, 'let's sum up'. We have all the main players, moves galore, various different challenges, highly-detailed graphics and the full array of on-screen menus to show how you're faring. Also, the health and fitness of the wrestler, along with a baying crowd and some really authentic music really gets you into the swing of things. Hey, let's not forget some neat commentary or the intelligent camera that picks the action from the best vantage point for the player.



It's the little touches like the facial expressions that appear when a wrestler gets one where it really hurts, and the clever choreography of moves that are almost seamless, that gives this the real polish/class of WWF Royal Rumble. Shadows of the wrestlers on the canvas, sweat dripping down their brow [calm down - Ed]; you will be impressed with every aspect of the game. We must confess, though, when the ring was full of bodies it did feel somewhat claustrophobic. Moves are hard to execute when the action is so frantic, and you wonder if the ring should not have been made bigger, but I guess they are sticking to the real thing. This is an arcade game with full licence to thrill.



Publisher Eidos Interactive
Released September 2000

Developer Hothouse Creations
Genre Party



Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

Or to put it another way, 'who doesn't?', but can this quiz show conversion win your dosh?

Already doing well in America, the UK version of Who Wants to be a Millionaire? is set for release in September. The game features all the thrills and spills of the TV show, though you only win virtual money by getting the questions right in this one. The

show's presenter, Chris Tarrant, is also featured - look out for his famous line, "Is that your final answer?".

The questions are all-new. There are a thousand of them in total, and the game's designed not to repeat them until all 1000 have been asked once. They're written for the UK market too, so you're not constantly avalanched with questions about America as you were in Chef's Luv Shack.

IS THAT YOUR FINAL ANSWER?

Money for Nothing

In the single-player game, you're asked 15 increasingly difficult questions in your attempt to win a million. Multiplayer modes include Fastest Finger, where the first person to put four answers into the correct order gets to go for the dosh, Head to Head, the inevitable Vs mode and a Team Game where you take it in turns. Up to four people can play.

All the features of the TV show are there too. Look out for 50:50, Ask the Audience (a sample of 100 people is polled), and Phone a Friend - ten different voices are offered.

Quiz games have a chequered past - they tend to be too US-centred or the questions too often repeated. As the developers have addressed both these problems with Who Wants to be a Millionaire?, it could well break the mould.



Publisher Virgin
Released TBA

Developer Capcom
Genre Beat-'em-up

Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike

Here's Capcom's latest entry into the Dreamcast Fight Club...



Well, whadayaknow? These two make a return...

First rule of Street Fighter; you don't talk about Street Fighter. Second rule of Street Fighter; you DON'T talk about Street Fighter.

There are few things in life which are certain, apart from death and taxes. We also know that the sun will always rise in the morning (as long as the Apocalypse hasn't arrived by the time this issue reaches you), and that Capcom will make sure we have more Street Fighter games than we



could ever feasibly play in one lifetime. Bless 'em.

So far, the Dreamcast has been graced with two dedicated Street Fighter entries (Street Fighter Alpha 3 and Street Fighter: Double Impact), as well as Marvel Vs Capcom I and II. And if you want to be picky, you could also include the similarly-themed JoJo's Bizarre Adventure too. Not bad for a console that's not even a year old in Europe. And Capcom shows no sign of slowing down, as it proudly gave us

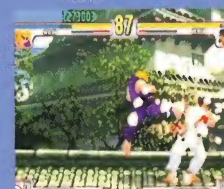
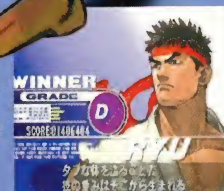


preview code of its latest beat-'em-up opus; Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike.

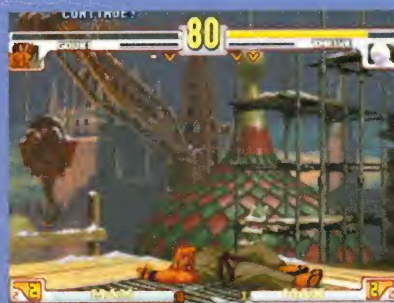
What does this instalment offer you that you haven't seen before? Well, truth be told, there are no real advances, but then dyed-in-the-wool SF addicts wouldn't have it any other way, right? Mind you, for us, the best thing about this new SF entry is the excellent System Direction Mode. It does exactly what it says on the tin. Par example; if you're not

FIRST RULE OF STREET FIGHTER; YOU DON'T TALK ABOUT STREET FIGHTER

happy with the default game set-up, this cool mode allows you to tailor the game to suit your every beat-'em-up whim. So, if your best mate happens to think he's a Street Fighter legend, take him down a peg or two by getting him to have a bash on your 'unique' version of 3rd Strike.



Ever got the feeling we've been here before?



| | | | |
|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------|
| Publisher | THQ | Developer | Darkblack |
| Released | September 2000 | Genre | Sports Sim |



MTV SPORTS:
SKATEBOARDING

a moving team

There are 20 selectable pro and fantasy skaters, including Andy Macdonald, Colin McKay, Danny Way, Rick Howard, Brain Howard, Josh Kalis, Stevie Williams, Jen O'Brien, plus a host more, each with their signature styles and moves.



MTV Sports: Skateboarding



MTV SPORTS: SKATEBOARDING

vmu

The VMU saves high scores and keeps the set-up of how fit your skater is and what boards and areas are unlocked in the game.



■ Bloody show-off...

THQ certainly knows how to get a game noticed, MTV-style!

Having been given a sneak peak at this game, it strikes us that most skateboarding titles appear almost generic, using the same settings and with the whole ambience set in stone. Indoor and outdoor arenas, the familiar air tricks and the background music... MTV Sports Skateboarding is different. Look closer and you find a

long list of improvements. Some new innovations give this game added appeal, not least the large skateboards themselves. They're the largest seen in a game of this kind, and draw you even closer to the boarders, giving you a real empathy. Although essentially an arcade game, it has enough authenticity in the way the boarder moves, the worlds you move in and interaction, to give it a simulation feel without losing any playability or fun.

with objects and vary greatly, giving real value for money. One of the genre's real downsides has been repetitive looks, but not here. A fresh challenge is always on for the boarder, and merely exploring is fascinating in itself, for you never know what you might find.

Trip the Light Fantastic

There are nine modes, including Lifestyle, Freeskate, Tag, Battle, Stunt and Time-Trial. Stunt Mode is

NEW INNOVATIONS GIVE THIS GAME ADDED APPEAL

One of the neatest features of the game is that it has many varied arenas and 25 levels, both indoors and out, along with some fantasy/secret levels. The settings are rich

pretty resplendent, and here the player skates from one point to the next in the shortest amount of time, scoring the highest combo. There are ramps to balance and traverse, mid-air flips, landing on rails and grinding to safety. Freeskate allows the player to skate around and try

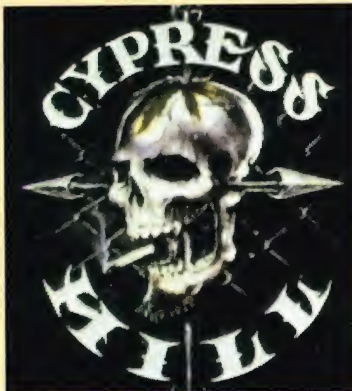




MTV SPORTS: SKATEBOARDING

music to watch skateboarding by...

MTV Sports: Skateboarding has the familiar and now almost-obligatory soundtrack, but it's a darn good one featuring music from The Deftons, System of a Down, Cypress Hill, Pennywise, Snapcase, Goldfinger, No use for a Name, Kottonmouth Kings, Flash Point and the Piffers.



So calm, so casual, so bloody cool it hurts!

LIFESTYLE MODE TAKES YOU FROM RAGS TO RICHES

out different tricks and learn how to control your skater, whilst Lifestyle Mode takes you from rags to riches and puts you in competitions. In all the modes, the array of moves, tricks – call them what you like – is the main highlight factor, for there are over 60 character-based tricks grouped into thousands of combos to learn and have fun with, far more than in Tony Hawk's. Multiplayer Mode is an area that really appeals to competitive players.

MTV Sports: Skateboarding is packed to bursting point, and it's a pity we can only spotlight a small part of the game. Technically, it offers real-time shadows and lighting in multiple directions, plus a perfectly-tailored learning curve. The better you get, the more areas/settings are unlocked. Along with Andy MacDonald's help, nothing appears to have been overlooked. Intelligent camera views mean you can see what needs to be seen.

There's named boards and merchandise to kit yourself out with, and wicked console-controlled competitors to keep you wanting to improve your own score and skill levels. Another cool inclusion is that of the computer skaters who navigate environments simultaneously with the player's boarder, so watch out for collisions!

Possibly most essentially it has controls that allow you to manipulate your moves. These no-doubt take some learning, and initially it comes with a price, but once you master them you feel that rush of adrenaline that the real guys and gals get, and can make moves you could only ever dream of in real life! Far out, man...

SKATEBOARDING



Bowls are great for big air and quick, trick-after-trick style action...



| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Publisher | Crave Entertainment | Developer | Crave Entertainment |
| Released | TBA | Genre | Action |

Already released to critical acclaim on the PC, this near-epic, no-holds-barred terrorist action wargame left nothing to the imagination, hence its '18' rating. It is no exaggeration to say Dreamcast owners will find this a real gem of a title. Its explosive action and varied missions ensure both arcade gamers and even strategy fans find most this compelling.

They Say

The aim of the game was to strive to make *Soldier of Fortune* as realistic as possible without sacrificing the fun factor for the players. As a result, a move was made from absolute realism to more of an 'action movie' type of realism. This is a far cry from the original concept for the game, which revolved around tactics,

Soldier of Fortune

A breathtaking ultra-realistic shooter...



■ "Hello... is anyone home?"



A STRONG AND IMMERSIVE FEEL PULLS THE PLAYER INTO THE GAME, COMPELLING HIM/HER TO FINISH IT AND SAVE THE WORLD

simulation and super-realism. Soldier of Fortune is fast and furious action, with a more hyper-realistic gameplay feel. Research for the game was pretty intensive, for this is not your average Quake offering.

A mountain of books and research on the Internet to study weapons and their effects was just one aspect in getting the game right. Everyone on the original PC team was an action movie fan, so they had no trouble finding references in the cinema. The best resource was the obvious one—John Mullins, the real-life mercenary

who was hired to consult on the game. His input on weapon effects, sound and gameplay was invaluable to the development process.

A Thriller

The story and the plot are the driving forces behind the game. The player cares about John Mullins (central figure in the game) and the job that he

has to do. A strong and immersive feel pulls the player into the game, compelling

him/her to finish it and save the world.

There are ten missions spanning 26 levels all over the globe, which have yet to be confirmed. The missions

vary in many ways. Some of them are search and destroy, while others require you to retrieve items and/or information from the enemy. There is even a level that takes place on the back of a moving train, and really each situation and environment is different. Each of the missions and its objectives enhances the story and brings the player further into the experience.



■ Watch out for Mullins; he can kill with one finger!



Publisher Take 2
Released September 2000

Developer Terminal Reality/GODs
Genre Racing



■ We're talking about near photo-realistic graphics!

4X4 EVOLUTION

Facts to Log Onto!

In order to keep the game constantly changing and fresh, TR has designed it to transfer custom tracks online. When the host has a new track that the other players do not have, it transfers that track to all the clients who don't have it. The transfer is very quick, and does not interrupt the game. With an infinite number of tracks possible, there will constantly be new tracks to learn and new challenges to face.

THE FRAME RATE IS ROCK-STEADY ON THE DREAMCAST



attention to vehicle mechanics are essential, and they're sure to add a number of new options for those that love racing.

The Evolution 4x4 spec list is impressive, and the online options



are probably the most comprehensive we've yet seen in a Dreamcast game. Whereas many development teams go for either looks or realism, TR appears to have gone for both. For the sheer quality of detail, it appears they have gone from top to bottom and back again a number of times to make this a game that will keep you playing for months on end.

Sure, everyone wants their game to be the best, but time and resources appear to hold no restraints. With such tough competition on the Dreamcast, they know they must produce something special...

We were slightly nonplussed regarding another speed game, but this could turn out to be a real winner. Now before we even speak about 4x4, the racing aspects, if you consider the fact that the game details include racing at any time of day or night, birds that have their own AI (they flock or fly individually), a

4x4 exclusive Evolution

If it's a touchy-feely racer you want, then you've got it!

ranking search to find best timing for tracks and players, weather conditions that are as diverse as you will ever see, plus a whole lot more, you then sense this could be, well, special! You could easily assume the team has gone for some cheap shots just to impress, but no, this comes on top of a newly-created 3D engine and AI that's smart.

4x4 Evolution puts drivers behind the steering wheel of one of a number of four-wheelers, and challenges them to race through an assortment of detailed off-road environments. Featuring rugged, customisable 4x4 vehicles, it has 50

TERMINAL REALITY

vehicles to choose from, along with a rough off-road driving experience through a total of 16 tracks, each with its own distinctive design, music score and difficulty level. Compete in a series of off-road races to make some serious cash, then use your winnings to upgrade

WHEN TR DECIDED TO ADD ONLINE PLAY FOR THE DREAMCAST VERSION OF 4X4 EVOLUTION, THEY DIDN'T WANT TO BE LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE

and customise vehicles, selecting from a collection of enhancements, including heavy-duty off-road suspension, brush guards, performance exhaust and special off-road racing tyres.

I Like Driving in my Car!

The cars themselves will include the Toyota 4 Runner, Lexus RX300, Toyota Land Cruise, Nissan

Pathfinder/Xterra, Rav4 plus many more. The team are still adding new vehicles. All have realistic suspension systems, and realism appears to be the order of the day, although it was pointed out that a certain amount of licence is used to ensure gameplay wins out. All the custom features are included - heavy-duty suspensions, suspension lifts, off-road tyres, long travel suspensions, high-performance engine parts and more. You have to decide which modifications need to



■ Hey, I can see my house from heeeerrree!!!



Test it Out

4x4 has been running online for the last four months in the test phase. Currently the Dreamcast will support four players online. That could be any combination of two players split-screen playing, two others playing split-screen, two players playing split-screen against two other players playing full screen on their own Dreamcast, or four players all playing on their own machines in full screen. They've also had the multi-platform aspect working for the last four months, and so far it seems to work great!



Loading



be made before entering a race; not an easy task. From the version we saw, which was coming on well, it all appeared in place and driving was slick, within the free-roaming 3D landscapes. If the Air Force Base, Swamp and a Junkyard circuits are anything to go by, each has a great feel and the challenges are as different as you could hope for.

Actually keeping on course is pleasurable hard, and cutting across open expanses will not work in most cases. Checkpoints are set up at various locations along the track to keep you in line. All those little embellishments are here: puddles, fences and even an aeroplane hanger that houses a stealth fighter can be driven past, and even the glare of the sun makes you squint! A number of views are on offer and all have the standard functionalities, with on-screen meters, speed, position of the driver, etc. These have been designed not to clutter up the screen.



You might be in a huge 4x4, but it's still worth waiting for the train to pass...



Controls are straightforward, although a number of set-up modes for button presses are on offer.

Logging On – The Next Phase

When TR decided to add online play for the Dreamcast version of 4x4 Evolution, they didn't want to be like everyone else. As their spokesperson explained, "We wanted to make the online play add an immense amount of new gameplay challenge. Currently, the online option encompasses the following: the World Rankings, where players have the ability to take their statistics (Fast Lap, Longest Jump, Most Money Earned, Total Mileage, etc.) and submit them to the World

Rankings server online. The players can then see how they rank compared to everyone else in the world. For Fast Laps on the World Rankings server, players will be able to download a replay of another players' Fast Lap to their VMU. The player can then race against a 'ghost' of that person's fast lap. Players can also compete with other statistics, such as the most miles or kilometres driven, the most money earned in the game, the longest jump, etc. If you want you can also enter what country you are from. We will keep 'score' based on which countries fill the top spots. Players can see where they're ranked as well as where their country is ranked. Players can support their country by trying to place higher in the rankings".

Next there is the multiplayer online feature. Players can log onto the Internet and race against other 4x4 Evolution owners. On the Dreamcast, you and a friend can play split-screen (split-screen is supported in single-player, and the online mode in 4x4 Evolution) while online

II ACTUALLY KEEPING ON COURSE IS PLEASURABLY HARD



Faster, Faster...

According to TR, "The frame rate is rock-steady on the Dreamcast. The Dreamcast modem is actually quite adequate for online play. There are three aspects that effect multiplayer that are Dreamcast related. First there is the connection speed of the modem. The connection speed determines how much information can be transferred in a given time period.

"The Dreamcast has a 56k modem in the US, but in the UK, owners have 33k modem. Even so, this is more than enough bandwidth to transfer the information needed. Next there is the type of modem. The Dreamcast has an analogue modem. The Dreamcast has to convert digital information to analogue to transfer it over the phone. That information is

then received at an Internet Service Provider (ISP), and converted from analogue to digital to transfer over the Internet. It is then received by another ISP and converted from digital to analogue to transfer over the phone. Lastly it is converted again from analogue to digital on another player's Dreamcast and used by the game. Each of those conversions is quick, but they take time and add up. This time from when information is sent until it is received is called latency. "Beyond the Dreamcast, there are many other factors that can effect latency, such as the quality of the ISP used and how far physically the information needs to travel. On the Dreamcast's modem with a good ISP we have seen latencies around 200ms-300ms. If the software to control the modem is slow or has problems, it can effect play. Remember that PCs have had modems and multiplayer games for quite a while. The Dreamcast is just as capable at online games as a PC. The trick is designing your game to run well on an Internet connection. In our internal testing, the game has run very well on high latency connections, and has still been very playable. We have been creating online-capable racing games on the PC for the last five years, so we have a lot of experience in knowing how to make a game run well online".

II EVEN THE GLARE OF THE SUN MAKES YOU SQUINT!

racing against other 4x4 Evolution owners. Players also have the ability to share custom-made tracks. The tracks are small enough in file size so that they can be transferred automatically over the Internet. The online portion of the game will never get old because there will be a lot of new tracks constantly released, and it will be very easy to play them over the Internet.

Many Dreamcast owners love the option of online games, and does it work and offer a truly competitive experience. TR

certainly thought so. "Racing online has a tremendous amount of appeal. There's nothing better than competing against another human being. In a single-player game you eventually figure out how to beat the AI. In an online environment you are constantly racing against different people, so the challenge goes up immensely. There is no greater thrill than racing side by side with other humans and not knowing what they're going to do. You have to develop a strategy on how you are going to be able to pass this person. Do you dive to the inside or do you try him on the outside? Do you give him a nudge in the rear or go for a clean pass? When you finally do make the pass, there's a great sense of satisfaction because you know it is another human being and not some lines of code. People get great satisfaction from competing with others".

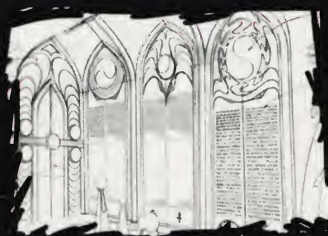
■ The Arizona off-road open-air car showroom didn't get many customers...

feature

exclusive

EVIL DEAD

Publisher: THQ • Developer: Heavy Iron • Release: November 2000 • Genre: Action Adventure/Horror



■ That severed hand's back to haunt Ash...

Fight 'em!

Freedom of movement in combat is fluid. Ash won't have to pivot in one location in order to use a weapon. Instead, the player can simultaneously run around and use selected weapons. Additionally, the player has the option of using two weapons at once, the chainsaw being attached to his right arm while his left hand is free to use one of the other available weapons. There's even some cool finishing moves Ash can use against the deadites.

HAIL TO THE KING

It's time to get Nasty...

The Evil Dead team at Heavy Iron comprises 17 artists, three designers, four programmers and one producer, who also helps out with the design. All are big fans of Evil Dead!

Many of you may not have seen the classic horror film *Evil Dead* or its sequels, which are now regarded as cult films. With their over-the-top on-screen antics, they shocked a lot of film-goers, but spawned many clones, but none came close to the quality of the original. The film was actually banned for a period of time, and the versions now available have been heavily cut.

The ambience of the film was dark and sinister, laced with moments that traumatised many. It was so extreme in some of its blood-gorging scenes that it was actually funny. The people behind the film, its creators Sam Raimi, Robert Tapert and Bruce Campbell (the actor who played the part of the

hero Ash), have had input regarding the creation of this new game, with voice-overs from Bruce Campbell himself. He is a keen videogames player and has been in a number of games recently. Eager to find out more about the game, we give you an uncut interview with its producer, Scott Krager...

Cutting Edge

Evil Dead: Hail to the King takes place eight years after the third *Evil Dead* film, *Army of Darkness*, and once again pits Ash against the armies of the undead. It's closely based on the three films, with even some of their locations recreated.

The game follows the classic good vs bad formula. Technically the game pushes the DC to its limits, and although this will be released on PC, it's the DC which

is the surprise lead machine. Getting the look of the game right is essential, otherwise it could turn out to be another hack-and-slay game with some adventure added as an afterthought.

Thankfully, this appears not to be the case. The team has focused strongly on getting the mood, dialogue and whole feel just right!

Pre-rendered backgrounds are animated, which allows for more detailed, lively, creepy environments. Animating backgrounds also allows for great camera movement. *Evil Dead: Hail to the King* includes a combination of static camera angles and cinematic camera moves, which are used for cool reveals.

Ash to Ashes...

The game includes several of the cool elements seen in the films,

Tell me a story

Jeff Branion, Kris Jackson and Scott Krager wrote the script. Jeff and Kris are two of the game's designers. During the voiceover sessions, Bruce Campbell apparently added some ad-libs and a few extras. According to the team, he's a very funny guy and great to work with.



The perfect blend of horror, humour and blood-curdling excitement

but the team has also added to its existing storylines by providing new environments, enemies, characters and weapons, as well as a plot that continues the saga of Ash and the Necronomicon. And, of course, players can assume the role of their favourite square-jawed, shotgun-toting, chainsaw-armed hero, Ash.

They know where you live...

Enemies are more varied than previously seen in the genre. There's a wide variety of deadites that players encounter as they progress through the game. They have more moves, move more quickly and have more personality. As seen in the *Evil Dead* films, many of the deadites even verbally taunt you, so the game won't be just a string of encounters with slow-moving zombies. Instead, enemies are more varied with respect to look, moves and personality.



QUESTION TIME

Scott Krager, Executive Producer, THQ

DCM: We guess we need to know whose idea it was to make a game of *The Evil Dead*?

THQ: The initial idea was something I had been thinking about for quite some time, even before coming to THQ. I had tried to get the game off the ground at the game publisher where I previously worked, but was unsuccessful. After coming to THQ, I again made it a priority to get *The Evil Dead* in development. Fortunately, the company realised the value of the licence and gave it the green light. Also, we were fortunate in getting the Heavy Iron folks together to develop the game. They're a talented group, and big fans of *The Evil Dead*.

DCM: The films are full of creatures and monsters, and there are some really evil forces at work. Is the game based solely on what we have seen in the films, or have you added any other characters?

THQ: Yes, there are NPCs with whom Ash interacts at various points in the game. Some of the more prominent characters include Evil Ash, who is the main villain, Jenny, Ash's girlfriend, whom he

must save, and last but not least, Abdul Alzeez, who is the author of the *Necronomicon*. There are some additional characters as well.

DCM: The game offers plenty of action, fighting and loads of weapons to find and use. Does it also offer lots of interaction with the scenery? Can you chainsaw trees as opposed to people, for example? Does the game come to life and offer lots to do and see?

THQ: Well, there are loads of weapons. In addition to the axe, the player first accumulates standard-range weapons like a pistol, shotgun, rifle, etc. Then, as the game progresses, the player can acquire weapon upgrades that augment the functionality of the existing weapons. Weapons and upgrades are collected by finding them throughout the different environments, and sometimes by defeating a boss character. And, of course, the chainsaw is a big part of the weapons suite. We can't have Ash without his trusty chainsaw.

It's not all about getting the enemy. Exploration and a compelling storyline are in store for the player, along with some really exciting challenges and puzzles.



We've tried to balance action with exploration. There are cut scenes throughout the game that give the player objectives and convey the storyline. Ash can interact with various real-time objects, which are either weapons, supplies or pieces of puzzles that must be solved in

DCM: We are told that the creators of the film were involved, and had some say. Did you have any arguments, or feel like doing an Ash and getting mean?

THQ: Fortunately, there hasn't been any arguments. Because Sam is

WE HAVE BEEN VERY CAREFUL TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE FILMS

the game. Ash interacts with NPCs during cinematics, and sometimes during gameplay, at which point he typically does battle with them.

DCM: Are the environments based on the three films? How big are they in terms of time taken to explore, and will we be able to recognise these places?

THQ: It's a game of two halves. The first half is set in the woods, which includes the infamous cabin. The second half is set in ancient Damascus at the time the *Necronomicon* is being written. The cabin and the 'claw' bridge are locations from the films which we included in the game. We've been very careful to be faithful to the films when recreating these environments. We captured a slew of stills from *Evil Dead 2* so we could use them as reference when building the cabin. If you've seen any screenshots, you see it looks nearly identical to how it appeared in *Evil Dead 2*. The rest of the woods contains new environments, and Damascus is comprised of completely new environments as well - all very cool. Each half is different in terms of visual content, but the *Evil Dead* universe inspires both.

busy with *The Gift* and *Spiderman*, his involvement has been pretty limited. He and Rob Tapert, the producer of all three *Evil Dead* films, provided feedback at the design stage. In fact, it was their idea to include the cabin and woods in the game - they wanted to go back to the roots of *The Evil Dead*. But Bruce has been the most involved, being the star of the game. Later on, he'll make another trip to the Heavy Iron offices to give feedback on the game. And we'll continue to send early versions to Sam and Rob. Sam, Rob and Bruce all have final approval on the game.

DCM: Obviously *The Evil Dead* is not your average game; it's pretty gruesome, so will probably have an age rating. What are your thoughts on this 'censorship'?

THQ: Well, it's understood that a game based on *The Evil Dead* will get a Mature rating [American equivalent of our '18' - Ed] because of the blood and gore. When you license a property like *The Evil Dead*, you have to be faithful to the source material, and knowing that allows you to start planning around ratings and content issues from the beginning. Having a ratings system is good for gamers. It's up to games





EVIL DEAD

ASHES 2 ASHES

publishers to decide how, when and where they want to work with or around it.

DCM: OK, lets get back to the game. Most games have zombies and creatures that are pretty stupid and merely cannon-fodder. How intelligent are the undead? Can they learn how you work?

THQ: Nice one! Glad you picked up on this point. The undead, known as deadites in The Evil Dead universe, are intelligent and much more dynamic than enemies seen in some of the other survival horror games. Because there's more emphasis on action in The Evil Dead, the enemies need to behave in such a way that they don't seem repetitive or become boring. In other words, we don't want to limit the combat in any way. For example, gameplay won't be as resource management-oriented as the typical survival horror game. It will be faster and more furious. Ash swings his chainsaw and fires weapons at all the primitive screwheads he encounters. Moreover, he can pull off a combo-finishing move on every deadite in the game, not to mention throw out his famous one-liners to taunt them. And if that wasn't enough, the enemies actually react to the one-liners; for example,

For example, other survival horror games often use puzzles such as, the player must find the hawk-shaped key hidden in the statue at city hall in order to open the gardener's shed. Why is the key hawk-shaped? Why is it hidden in the statue at city hall? Gameplay makes sense, but the logic behind it doesn't. So the puzzles in The Evil Dead, while utilising some familiar gameplay conventions, make a little more sense. For example, throughout the game Ash needs to find certain items in order to solve certain puzzles. These items make sense within the context of the given situation. Additionally, The Evil Dead utilises puzzle elements to enhance certain combat experiences. In other words, in addition to using weapons, players have to manipulate the environment around them in order to defeat particular boss characters or deadites. At one point, Ash needs to make his way out of an archery range overcome with bow-slinging deadites. If he makes a run for it, he's killed. So, the puzzle involves Ash having to use some objects around him in order to safely exit the range.

DCM: Does the game offer any strategy element?

THQ: The answer to this question depends on your definition of



THERE'S A LOT OF STRATEGY IN TERMS OF HOW YOU BATTLE ENEMIES

becoming more or less aggressive, depending on the enemy.

DCM: We all know how to fight, so give us some examples of the puzzles in the game.

THQ: They are somewhat similar to those seen in other survival horror games, but make more logical sense.

strategy. There's a certain level of strategy in terms of how you decide to battle enemies or approach certain situations, but for the most part, the gameplay revolves around action, puzzle-solving and exploration.

DCM: Do the enemy get harder to kill as you progress?

THQ: There are some enemies that remain fairly constant throughout the game, and others that become increasingly more difficult. There are over 20 different enemies in the game, each with some unique animations and behaviours, and there are also boss characters. One goal has been to keep the

enemies interesting so players don't become bored.

DCM: Some games become predictable and boring. Do the enemy have random points where they appear, or is it the same each time?

THQ: Some have random points and some have fixed points. It depends on the situation as it relates to gameplay and location. This is something that will be fine-tuned during the game-balancing stage.

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MONTHLY
THE BEST TECHNOLOGY - ONE GAME



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JUST THE BASIC JOYPAD HERE, BUT THE DIGITAL PAD WORKS WONDERS, ALLOWING YOU TO LOOK AS THOUGH YOU REALLY ARE JIM COURIER OR TIM HENMAN PERFORMING ACROBATICS OUT ON COURT. TRY ANALOGUE, THOUGH, AND THINGS GET TRICKY. PERSEVERE, AND YOU MIGHT PREFER IT.

COMING SOON...

Virtua Athlete 2K

THE NEXT VIRTUA GAME OFF THE BLOCKS IS VIRTUA ATHLETE 2K. IT OFFERS PLAYERS THE CHANCE TO COMPETE IN SEVEN EVENTS, INCLUDING 100M HURDLES, LONG JUMP AND JAVELIN. IF SEGA'S DECATHLETE ON THE SATURN IS ANYTHING TO GO BY, ALL EVENTS ARE GOING TO BE A LOT OF FUN. SHAME THERE'S ONLY SEVEN OF THEM, THEN...



INITIALLY...

FAST-PACED PONG WITH THE BEST GRAPHICS I'VE SEEN IN A LONG TIME ARE MY IMMEDIATE REACTIONS. THEN A FEW MINUTES LATER, REALISATION THAT I HAVEN'T HAD THIS MUCH FUN SINCE THE LAST TIME I WATCHED MIKE MYERS DOING HIS SCOTTISH IMPRESSION IN 'SO I MARRIED AN AXE MURDERER'.



KEEPS SCORE FOR YOU. SAVES EVERYTHING AUTOMATICALLY AND EVEN DEPICTS THE GAME AS IT HAPPENS IN LCD FORMAT. WANNA BE REALLY FLASH? TRY BEATING A MATE BY JUST WATCHING THE LCD AND NOT THE TV SCREEN (DEFEATS THE OBJECT, THOUGH, DOESN'T IT? - ED).

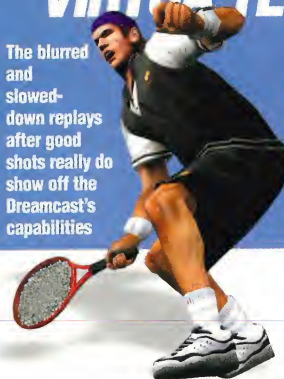
VIRTUA TENNIS

exclusive review

With specific orders not to mention slinky blonde tennis babe Anna Kournikova even once, Saul takes to the court for a few sets of Virtua Tennis. But can he follow orders?



The blurred and slowed-down replays after good shots really do show off the Dreamcast's capabilities



VIRTUA TENNIS



The graphics really are this good, and yes; it plays as good as it looks too!

It's that time of year again. At the time of writing, Wimbledon is well under way and middle England is collectively glued to the edge of its seat. Which of the Williams sisters will win that historical semi? Who's going to take away the coveted men's singles title? Will Sir Cliff do an impromptu version of Summer Holiday? These questions are now basically irrelevant. Not because they'll be answered by the time you read this, but because I've got Virtua Tennis, and I can take to the courts myself and prove my tennis-playing prowess in what is, without a doubt, the best tennis game I have ever played. I'd even go as far to say it's possibly the best sports simulation I've ever played too, but then I am partial to a little ISS Pro Evolution on the

PSX, so the jury's still out on that one. What makes Virtua Tennis so damn good? Well, It's time to find out...

Tennis Fans

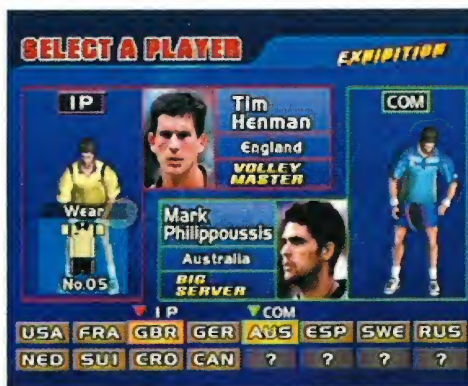
There's tennis fans and there's Tennis Fans. I fit into the former. The tennis fan that's only interested when Wimbledon is on, or Tim Henman is

GAMING JUST WON'T BE THE SAME ONCE YOU'VE LOST YOUR VIRTUA TENNIS GANG-BANG CHERRY

doing well in a Grand Slam tournament. A fair-weather supporter, you might say. However, give me a tennis game and I'm away. There's something about the sport that makes an

+ get training

Perhaps one of the best features of Virtua Tennis is the training games gained by passing certain trials. They're more bonus games than training, as each task is usually some kind of weird or whacked-out exercise. Take, for instance, the tennis bowling game, where you have to serve and knock down the pins. Or a crazy game where you have to whack tennis balls at huge coloured spheres to knock them off the court. The games are varied, and as well as being a whole load of fun, they actually help you to become a better player. So everybody's happy, then...

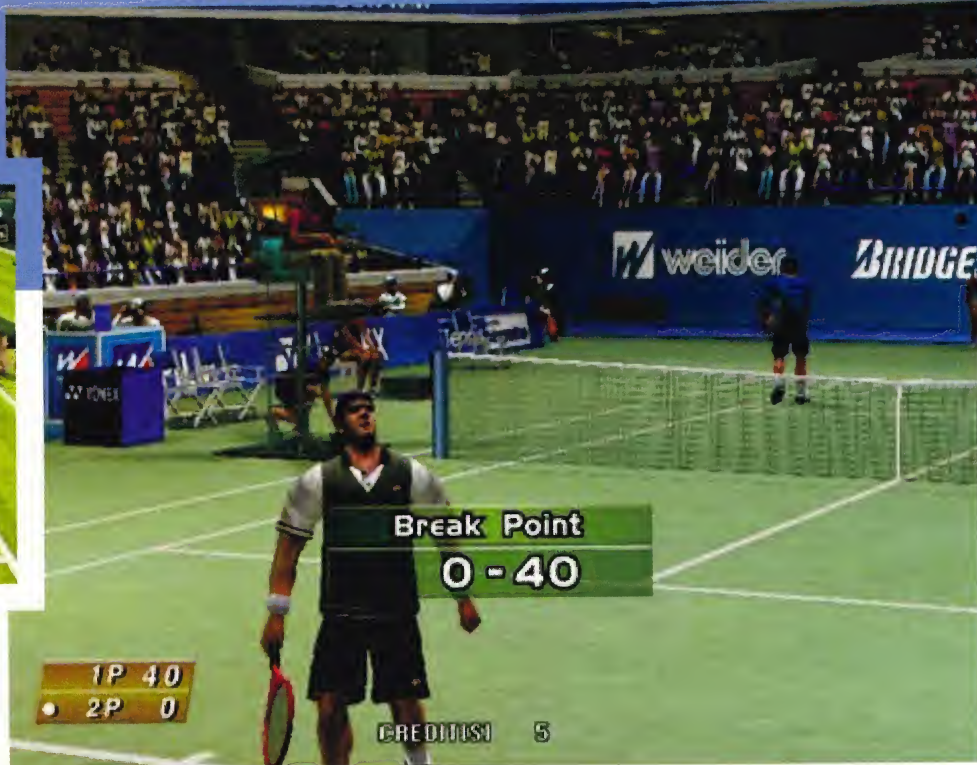


extremely addictive game. Let's face it, tennis is one of the oldest videogame influences around. Right from Pong, through to Super Tennis on the NES and Smash Court Tennis on the PSX, tennis has always had a healthy presence on games consoles, and it's never been healthier than now - Virtua Tennis is the pinnacle in the long line of tennis games.

It oozes class and quality right from the offset, where you're presented with a polished options screen asking whether you want to play an Arcade Match, an Exhibition Match or take to the World Circuit. Arcade and Exhibition are the usual fare, and are great for a quick set or a long multiplayer session, but the mainstay of the single-player mode is the truly innovative and extremely addictive World Circuit.



■ The close-up view looks great, but takes a little getting used to.



VIRTUA TENNIS



around the world

Taking to the World Circuit on Virtua Tennis isn't a simple case of entering different tournaments and working your way through the rounds. Instead, Sega has implemented a highly original structure that sees you taking on trials all around the world. Every time you pass a level of a trial, something new appears on the world map. This could be one of the cool training levels, a pro shop or another trial in a different country. This system keeps you playing well into the early hours, as you have to have 'just one more go' to see what you get next.



Continental Circuit

Instead of simply throwing you into a series of tournaments, which is what I initially expected, the World Circuit Mode starts you on a map of the world with just one competition (Trial), and a Training Mode for you to enter. As you progress, more trials and training modes open up around the world. Here's the clever bit, though; the competitions aren't straight-down-the-road tournaments or five-set matches. Oh no. Every trial is different, and every trial sets you a trial shot in which you have to perform particularly well. This could be serving, strokes, lobs or any other type of tennis shot you care to mention. Win the match (which usually consists of just a few games), and do well in the Trial Shot department and you earn a wedge of cash that can be blown in the tennis shop as well as access to yet more trials and training games. In the tennis shops you can buy anything from snazzy new sports apparel to extra players and arenas for

the Exhibition and Arcade Modes. Doing well in World Circuit Mode is the only way to open up these new characters (all of which are real-life players) and arenas, so it pays to practise if you want to see everything Virtua Tennis has to offer.

Practice Makes...

In fact, you'll need to practise if you're going to get anywhere at all, as Virtua Tennis is one hell of a tough game of Pong. All of the trials in the World Circuit are played at different levels, and while you may find it a pushover on Level One, move up a level and the computer players suddenly come to life. They play like professionals, and at times, it's hard to believe the CPU really has the intelligence to play that winning shot. But believe me it does, because I've been absolutely humiliated by CPU players, even on Level Two!

Lucky, then, the control system is simple, intuitive and incredibly user-friendly. Which is a

YOU CAN BUY ANYTHING FROM SNAZZY NEW KIT TO EXTRA PLAYERS AND ARENAS



■ All the players react superbly to crunch points and cool rallies...

good chunk of the reason why Virtua Tennis is so damned enjoyable to play. It's a simple case of using A for your general forehand and backhand strokes, and X or B for any lob shots you'd like to play. The CPU does a



Virtua Tennis



VIRTUA TENNIS

the Sega courts, or the scuff-marks that appear on the dusty Spanish court and you see what I mean. There's also some cool little touches you pick up on as you play, like the ball-boys following a rally or running out to collect the ball after it's hit the net. There's just so much detail that goes to make Virtua Tennis one of the most eye-grabbing, visually-stimulating games the Dreamcast has so far.

Rallying Around

Innovative game structure, incredible graphics and a control system that's intuitive and simple make Virtua Tennis a fast-paced tennis experience. I've been addicted to it since I first

+ gang bang

Virtua Tennis certainly makes use of those four lovely joypad ports at the front of the Dreamcast by providing one of the most hilarious and addictive multiplayer modes the Dreamcast Monthly team has been privy to. We've been wasting working hours by the week-load, and fears that the magazine wouldn't make print were ignored, just for 'one more game'. Rivalries and alliances are formed within minutes of picking up those four pads for some doubles action, and only the fittest and quickest survive what always turns out to be a fast, furious and side-splitting gaming session. What makes it so much fun is hard to pin-point, but believe me when I say now is the time to invest in those extra joypads you were thinking of buying, 'cos gaming just won't be the same once you've lost your Virtua Tennis gang-bang cherry.



TENNIS HAS ALWAYS HAD A HEALTHY PRESENCE IN GAMES, AND NEVER MORE HEALTHY THAN NOW

PS2. And considering the Dreamcast is barely a year young, this is a feat to be admired. We'll start with the players themselves, who all look spookily like their real-life counterparts. Apart from a few flat edges, some suspect shading and teeth that look like they've been bathed in vats of cola, you really can recognise that you're playing as Tim Henman, Carlos Moya and Jim Courier et al. Especially when you witness the awe-inspiring, slowed-down and motion-blurred action replays after every winning shot. It's not so much these cosmetic aspects as the in-game aspects, though. All of the players run around with a fluidity that's seldom seen in a sports sim. With rounded limbs, incredibly smooth animation and a variety of moves that Sampras himself would be envious of, the Virtua Tennis players really are the next level up in videogame character animation.

The incidental visuals don't pale in comparison either. All of the 12 world-wide courts have their own style, atmosphere and playing surface (which makes a huge difference to the game as it's played, by the way), and an incredible amount of unique graphical detail. Check out the reflective surface on the edge of

picked up the pad. From serving and volleying to powerful smashes, net play and back-court rallies, Virtua Tennis provides the complete gameplay package and has you just as addicted as I am in a very short space of time. Is it going to get full marks? Well, no. For a start, there's no Agassi or Sampras, not one woman player and no officially-licensed tournaments. Plus, I know that after the guaranteed success of Virtua Tennis it won't be long before we see a sequel, which could forseeably be better. Finally, though, and more importantly, there's no sign of Anna Kournikova... **END**

fine job of deciding what type of stroke you actually play using A, and although this bit is done for you, you do actually feel in control. Especially as deft use of the D-pad can change the power and angle of your return. The CPU does occasionally get it wrong, usually when it fails to smash the ball when that's the shot you really want to take, but this small quirk is forgivable, as everything else is as close to perfect as it gets. Including the graphics.

Virtual vsReal

It's been a long time since I've been so gob-smacked by the visuals on any game, but Virtua Tennis is one of the best-looking games I've set on any format, be it Dreamcast, PC, Arcade or



There are two views. This one, and close-up (see top left, opposite page).



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VERDICT

Tennis fans rejoice! Videogame fans rejoice! Virtua Tennis is a sports sim that can be played and enjoyed by everyone. The highly-addictive gameplay, fantastic visuals and all-round polish transcends its roots as a sports sim and make Virtua Tennis one of the few 'must-have' Dreamcast games. Go buy it now!

9

review

COMING SOON...

Aero Wings 2

LOOK OUT FOR AERO WINGS 2 (PAGE 38). THIS IS A SIMILAR SIMULATION-BASED GAME, THOUGH SET IN THE AIR RATHER THAN UNDER WATER.



WITH A GAME THIS SIZE, IT'S ESSENTIAL YOU SAVE REGULARLY, AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THE VMU DOES.

Peripherals



USE THE JOYPAD. YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE. AND THE VMU TOO...

INITIALLY...

IT'S A REALLY DEEP SUBMARINE-BASED GAME THAT'S LOW ON INSTANT THRILLS BUT POSES A LONG-TERM CHALLENGE. YOU SPEND THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF YOUR GAME IGNORING YOUR MISSION ORDERS AND CRUISING AROUND YOUR UNDERWATER WORLD, JUST 'COS IT LOOKS SO GOOD.

DEEP FIGHTER

Can you brave the terrors of the deep?

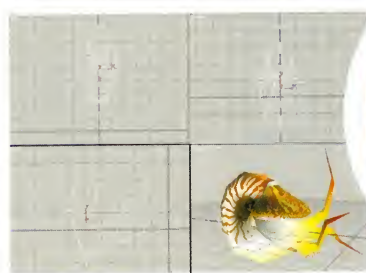
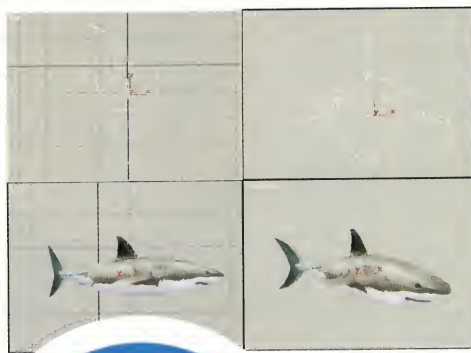
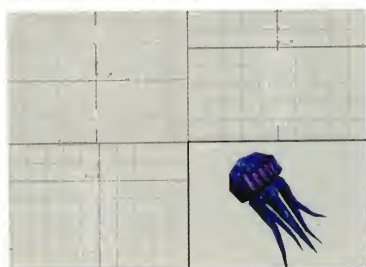
| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----------|------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------|----------------|------------------|
| Publisher | Ubi Soft | Developer | Criterion Software | Origin | UK | Genre | Battle Simulator |
| Available | Q4 2000 | Players | 1 | Price | £39.99 | Contact | 0181 944 9000 |

DEEP FIGHTER



attention to detail

The developers paid great attention to making even the most minor marine creatures look really good. Here we see how they constructed a few of 'em...



IF YOU LIKE YOUR GAMES CEREBRAL AND INVOLVED, GET DEEP FIGHTER

One thing's for sure. This isn't a game you can pick up to kill a spare ten minutes before the big film on BBC 1. Deep Fighter is a complex and involved sub sim which, while not above throwing you into an underwater dogfight, emphasises thought, subtlety, strategy and simulation. It's big on cinematic storyline too. In other words, for those who've played similar games on other formats, it's more a Wing Commander-style space opera (albeit under water) than Blast Radius, which stripped the genre to the bone and beefed up the dogfighting.

Set in the distant future (of course), while

the human race has turned the world into an idyllic paradise, it finds itself threatened by an alien race living beneath the waves. Honest! Why Jacques Cousteau never spotted them we'll never know, but just as they wiped out Atlantis, they now intend to wipe out the rest of humanity. You, and your colleagues, are Earth's only hope - piloting a miniature fighter submarine, you must fight your way through two discs packed with intriguing missions and well acted cinematic

FMV. For once, the developers have used professional actors instead of their programming staff, and it shows.

Wet Weekend...

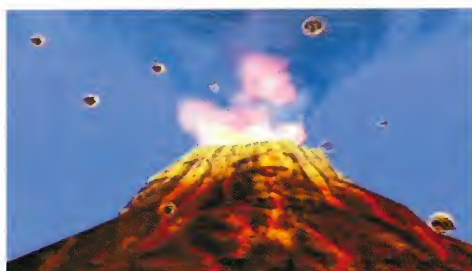
Each mission is preceded by an in-depth briefing from your commander. After arming your ship, you leave the confines of your crippled mothership to carry out your orders. These missions can involve collecting things, seeking and destroying enemy installations or structures, clearing an area of mines, intercepting an alien invasion fleet - you get the picture. The first mission, for instance, involves blasting thorium crystals into smaller pieces and then collect them for fuel. You're always in need of thorium, so you're instructed to gather more whenever you get a spare



Even the loading screen is suitably techie...

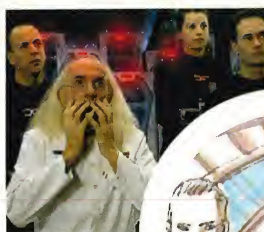


■ The undersea world offered by Deep Fighter is truly stunning.



+

how did they do that?



Deep Fighter contains about 30 minutes of spectacular FMV, with genuine actors offering a polished and professional performance. According to Criterion, "creating these sequences was something of an epic adventure in itself". Film director Tony Luraschi elaborated on the Deep Fighter scenario and mission descriptions given to him by developers, Criterion Studios. Luraschi, Criterion and Ubi Soft then set about planning the pre-mission video sequences in more detail. Specifics were added to the initial ideas through the use of storyboards, tying down every camera angle, actor movement,

and visual feature. A cast of British actors was assembled and everything was set for the team to begin filming.

In December of last year, filming began. The action was recorded entirely against blue screens using very few props. As anyone who has ever seen a 'making of' documentary knows, filming in such a way allows artists to plan for the digital inclusion of computer-generated backgrounds later. With all the sequences safely on tape, the Ubi Soft video team travelled back to France and set about making some coherent mission briefing cut-scenes from the many hours of blue-backgrounded footage. In January work began on video-capturing the film brought back from Halliford. At the same time, Ubi Soft artists rendered lovely digital backgrounds to fill in all the blue gaps.

By this stage, things were coming together nicely. All that remained to be done was the final edit. A hard disk containing the near-

finished video sequences was couriered from Paris to Guildford. Here, Criterion set to work on their final tidy-up. As well as working out timings and pacing, they took the painstaking task of adding their own touches frame by frame using Adobe PhotoShop and Premiere. These included tricks such as lighting glows and virtual props like the funky robotic mouthpiece worn by The Admiral (Andrew Hall). With everything lovingly polished, the sequences were converted to the Dreamcast. You can check out some clips of Deep Fighter's FMV at <http://www.ubisoft.co.uk/deepfighter/makingoffmv.html>.



THIS ISN'T A GAME YOU CAN PICK UP TO KILL A SPARE TEN MINUTES BEFORE THE BIG FILM ON BBC 1

few minutes during a mission. Yes, resource management plays a part in the game too. There's some puzzle-solving to do to. For example, in the second part of your opening mission, you have to use a grapple gun to remove a radio-active piece of granite from a fish farm. Or rather you don't. You can just blast it with your pulse gun and pick up the thorium shards in the usual way, a quicker and more rewarding method than the one you're instructed to use. Working out how to do something is as important as actually doing it, and thinking on your toes certainly pays dividends in this game.

As you would expect from a game of this type, the controls and head-up display are pretty daunting at first. Still, no one expects driving a futuristic mini-sub to be easy, and as I've said before (and will no doubt say again), this isn't a game which emphasises instant gratification. You soon get the hang of it,

however - the controls are pretty instinctive after a few minutes' play, and the HUD tells you everything you want to know without getting in the way.

Underwater Atmosphere

Where the game really shines, though, is in its atmosphere. Needless to say, the effects of gravity is seriously weakened by the water, but unlike a space game there IS an up and down. As your craft bobs up and down in the ocean, responding to every movement of the analogue stick as you tease it into position, you really feel like you're there. The echoey sound effects add to the intensity of the experience, as does the barked instructions offered by your CO.

The graphics are as lush as they come. The haggard undersea world looks so realistic you could almost reach out and touch it (if you wanted to risk getting soaked, that is). Some of the sea creatures are your friends, some are



WHERE THE GAME REALLY SHINES IS IN ITS ATMOSPHERE



■ On land, in sea – watch out for this hot little number...



your enemies, and still more sim around just 'cos, but all look refreshingly realistic. The fish even move in believable shoals. Once again, you spend your first five minutes just exploring for the sake of it. As day turns to night you've only got your sub's lamps to guide your way, but your missions continue and look just as stunning.



Deep Water

A few criticisms keep the game from greatness. The storyline, which unfolds due to other people's actions as well as your own, and getting it to fit in with the game's missions must have been a tremendous task, but it's not been 100% successfully achieved. Sometimes the game lags, making you wait around for something to happen ad drive the storyline on a little bit further. This is where you go looking for thorium to fill time and add to your all-important stocks. Although the mining prevents the lags from being disastrous, it does

seem a little tagged on, and makes you wonder if it was added specifically for this purpose. Still, this is a minor complaint about what is, overall, an excellent game. It's not for everyone - those looking for an instant adrenaline rush need not apply - but if you like your games cerebral and involved, get Deep Fighter. **END**

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VERDICT

A superb sub simulation that's only one flaw away from being an all-time great. Okay, so it lags a little at times, but it more than makes up for it with top simulation-style gameplay. This is one for the serious gamer. Buy it and lose entire weekends...

8

Written by Ian Osborne ian.osborne@questnet.co.uk



THE CONTROL SYSTEM IS OVERLY-AWKWARD, BUT THERE'S GOOD USE OF THE VIBRATION PACK, ALLOWING YOU TO FEEL EVERY BLOW OF THE MAKEN (OO-ER - ED).

COMING SOON...

Half-Life

THE FACT THAT THIS FIRST-PERSON ADVENTURE HAS AN INVOLVED PLOTLINE REMINDS US OF HALF-LIFE, THE FORTHCOMING FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER WHICH RECEIVED MANY PLAUDITS DUE TO ITS INTRIGUING STORYLINE. THE LATTER WAS NO DOUBT BECAUSE IT WAS WRITTEN BY A PROFESSIONAL SCI-FI AUTHOR AND NOT A HACK WHO HAS SPENT FAR TOO LONG PLAYING VIDEOGAMES. HOWEVER, UNLIKE MAKEN X, HALF-LIFE'S STORYLINE IS BACKED UP WITH AN INVOLVING GAMEPLAY EXPERIENCE WHICH WILL TAKE SOME BEATING.



INITIALLY...

THE OPENING MOVIE SEQUENCE DEPICTING THE AWAKENING OF THE MAKEN SWORD IS A MIXED AFFAIR; IT'S TECHNICALLY IMPRESSIVE, THE EFFECT IS MARRED BY THE TRULY CRINGE-WORTHY VOICE ACTING. WILL IT GET BETTER THAN THIS?



SORRY FIGHT FANS, BUT MAKEN X MAKES NO PARTICULAR USE OF THE VMU OTHER THAN ALLOWING YOU TO SAVE YOUR GAMES. OH, YOU DO GET A FUNNY RENDITION OF THE LOGO, THOUGH!

MAKEN X

Sega Europe has nabbed one of last year's most original Japanese Dreamcast games for release over here. But how will it fare under the critical eye of the Dreamcast Monthly team?

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------------|-------|---------------|--------|----------------|--------------|
| Publisher | Sega Europe | Developer | Atlus | Origin | UK | Genre | Action |
| Available | 25th Aug 2000 | Players | 1 | Price | £39.99 | Contact | 0181 9953399 |



deus ex machina

The use of the Latin phrase 'Ghost In The Machine' isn't just us being pretentious. It helps to explain the important gaming tactic of Brainjacking (in fact, it's justified since Kei says 'Deus Ex Machina' in Maken X's intro screen voice-over). Although you begin the game playing as Kei, there are important points during the adventure where you have to literally hijack the bodies of other characters you meet. This technique is accomplished via the Maken, and is known as Brainjacking. Initially, you're able to Brainjack a character at the beginning of a new stage, but further on in the game, you can become another character mid-way through a level, and sometimes even swap again before you reach the end of a stage.

The Maken is a bizarre hybrid of science and pseudo-magic. Maken X is a bizarre videogame hybrid of the first-person perspective and action adventure genres.

There is no doubting Maken X's origins - the off-the-wall plotline of demon swords, cute Anime-stylised schoolgirls and weird mutant-

his young schoolgirl daughter Kei becomes linked with the Maken sword. The player is then thrown straight into the action, taking on the role of Kei, who has to prevent the cyborg-like villain escaping the research lab with her father.

The first level is designed to get you used to the gaming

THERE'S A DARKER EDGE, PREVALENT IN THE S&M-THEMED VILLAINS

like villains firmly roots the game in the Land Of The Rising Sun. But considering the way in which the likes of Pokémon, Dragonball Z, Akira and Digimon have been lapped up by the Western World, Maken X will certainly attract a sizeable audience over here.

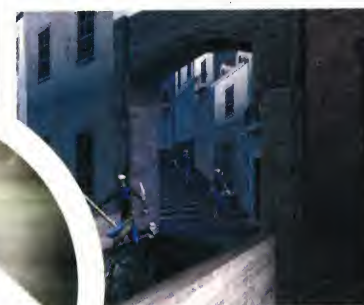
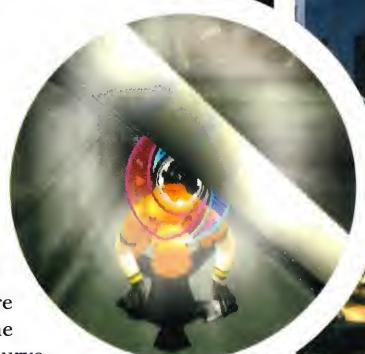
Granted, there's a darker edge to Maken, prevalent in the S&M-themed villains, which have noticeably been toned down a tad for the European version (eg. the goose-stepping Nazi bad guys from the Japanese original have been given the chop). However, all of that only adds to the game's appeal, but sadly this doesn't last much beyond after you've played through it first time around.

X-rated

The over-long cut-scene at the beginning of the game details exactly what a Maken actually is - in this case, a sentient sword with mystical powers which bonds with its host. Following a terrorist assault on a Japanese research lab, the head of the Maken project is kidnapped, and

system, and rather helpfully displays a number of the game's controls on-screen as you require them. Atlus deserves a pat on the back for this intuitive learning curve.

Unfortunately, the actual movement of the character is awkward and clumsy, which really grates when you attempt to turn a corner or jump onto platforms. The left and right trigger buttons alter the use of the control stick, providing look-around and strafing options respectively. So



Don't ask questions, just kick ass!



review **MAKEN X**



■ Excellent use of special effects makes Maken X a visual treat at times.

basically, it's not really possible to strafe and turn at the same time (something that would prove very useful when surrounded by a few rocket-launching bad guys). It is also very difficult to judge jumping distances between objects, as you cannot look and move at the same time either.

middle, which counts down every time you clout them with the Maken or a special attack. If you're surrounded by more than one bad guy (and you will be!), you can press the Y-button to select your opponent, or alternatively, abandon the lock-on system altogether.

Appliance of psi-ence

Graphically, Maken X is very impressive, and is one of those rare titles that really justifies the expense of a VGA box set-up. Playing through a monitor rather than a bog-standard TV set allows you to fully appreciate the gorgeous character designs and rich technicoloured environments (as

an aside, it makes you wonder why Eidos dropped the VGA option from the European release of Code: Veronica, particularly as it was available in Japan and the US). Unlike the vast majority of derivative videogames, Maken X's digital world is populated by some truly memorable characters, our particular favourites being the seductive Blademaster and a Shaja, who's tad tasty with the floating swords.

On the whole, the animation of the characters in the game is also impressive, with the main sword-wielding masked weirdoes moving with the grace and agility of a ballerina. However, in what proves to be a stark contrast,

II THE MAKEN IS A BIZARRE HYBRID OF SCIENCE AND PSEUDO-MAGIC

However, what does slightly compensate for this major niggle is the intuitive lock-on combat system, which has seemingly been lifted wholesale from the Nintendo 64's *Zelda: Ocarina of Time*. By simply pressing the Y-button on the control pad, you lock onto your adversary, meaning that no matter which direction you or it moves in, you're always facing it. This lock-on device also features an enemy health bar in the





the rocket-launcher thugs shuffle somewhat embarrassingly around the battle arena. This might be a deliberate design move on Atlus' part, but it just doesn't look right.

Maken X's elaborate backstory is hilarious sci-fi nonsense at its best, but could have done with some serious editing, and the voice-acting is incredibly awful! It might have something to do with the translation from East to West, but the plot expositions from the research scientists in between stages are far too long and unnecessary. It doesn't help that you can only flick through the dialogue, and not skip it altogether. This is worst at the beginning of the game, where the developer seems determined to tell you everything that's going on rather than let you play the game for yourself.

Chop suey

Its in-depth paranormal storyline and emphasis on arcade adventure action means that Maken X belongs in the same genre



category as Resident Evil Code: Veronica. Comparing it to Capcom's outstanding horror title may seem unfair, but proves a worthy case-in-point of the kind of quality to which all

Dreamcast games need to aspire. It isn't enough to simply throw in a few neat ideas and some polished graphics, if the remainder of the software package drags it down. Admittedly, Code: Veronica's control system was by no means perfect, but it never detracted from the gameplay. Maken X's fiddly movement system has you tearing your hair out once the action heats up.

It's also a genuine pity that no multiplayer aspect has been incorporated into Maken X. An additional gaming mode of

■ 'Look how high the ceiling is in this place... ha, you looked!'

some description would have added some much-needed variety, improving the value-for-money aspect of the package, and also going a long way to boost the game's final review score. Perhaps that's something we can look forward to in Maken X 2 then, Atlus?

After what seems like a Spring drought, we're currently riding a heady crest of a software wave, with a host of top-notch releases all jostling for our hard-earned. However, whilst Maken X is a visually impressive showcase, with a number of intriguing ideas to boot, we would strongly

PLAYING THROUGH A MONITOR RATHER THAN A BOG-STANDARD TV SET ALLOWS YOU TO FULLY APPRECIATE THE CHARACTER DESIGNS



■ Another one bites the dust, but there's still one to go...

advise you to try before you buy. In the tradition of Armada and the Street Fighter series, Maken X is an opinion-divider, split between those who love its Japanese quirkiness and those who would rather wait until Half-Life arrives. Can you guess which camp we're in? Here's hoping Atlus will iron out the kinks of Maken X in the sequel which is currently in development. **END**

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VERDICT

Yes, it IS a refreshing change from the traditional first-person perspective affair. But that said, there isn't really much here that will encourage you to come back again. Try before you buy.

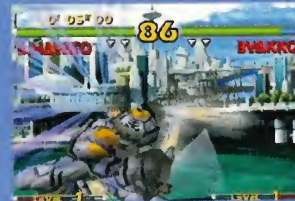
7

Written by Stuart Taylor

Peripherals



STICK TO THE D-PAD. IT GIVES YOU THE BEST RESPONSE AND IS GREAT FOR PULLING OFF THOSE HALF CIRCLE-STYLE STREET FIGHTER MOVES. OF COURSE, YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH THE ANALOGUE STICK, BUT YOU WON'T FEEL AS IN CONTROL.



ALTERNATIVELY.

Dead Or Alive 2

THIS ONE'S BEEN COMING FOR SOME TIME NOW, AND IF IT MET ITS RELEASE DATE IT SHOULD BE OUT BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, BUT IT COULD EASILY HAVE SLIPPED ANOTHER COUPLE OF MONTHS. WE'VE PLAYED THE IMPORT VERSION AND IT ROCKS, ESPECIALLY AS THE ARENAS ARE FULLY 3D, WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS AND AREAS FOR THE COMBAT TO TAKE PLACE. IT'S NOT A SOUL CALIBUR BEATER, BUT WHAT IS?

INITIALLY...

THE CAPCOM LOGO APPEARS, AND YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT YOU'RE IN FOR - AVERAGE-TO-ABOVE BEAT-'EM-UP FARE. THE INTRO STARTS OFF NICE AND ATMOSPHERIC, SO THINGS START TO LOOK UP, THEN A CRAPPY, BARELY-ANIMATED ANIME-STYLE SET KICKS IN. I EXPECT MORE FROM THE DREAMCAST.

NOTHING SPECIAL. IT SAVES YOUR PROGRESS AND TAKES UP SIX BLOCKS. NOW, HOW INTERESTING IS THAT?

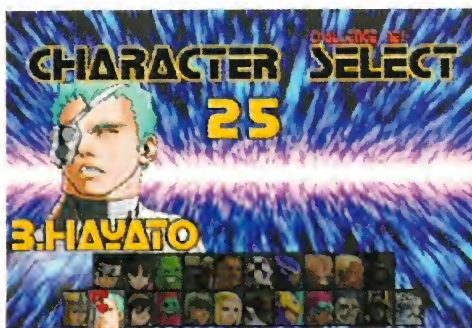
PLASMA SWORD

Another Capcom beat-'em-up arrives on the Dreamcast to less-than-rapturous applause. With Soul Calibur already established, is Plasma Sword a worthy contender? Saul finds out...

The Matrix defines *deja vu* as 'a glitch in the system that usually happens when they change something'. Well, I'm suffering from a concentrated case of *deja vu*, and believe me, there's nothing changed here. Plasma Sword is just like any other Capcom 3D beat-'em-up, from the likes of Street Fighter EX to Rival Schools. Which, I suppose, isn't the end of the world; after all, we know Capcom's 3D beat-'em-up engine does the job fine, but 'fine' just isn't enough when we've the likes of Soul Calibur on the Dreamcast, is it?

Star Gladiator Sequel

Plasma Sword is the pseudo-sequel to the forgotten PlayStation beat-'em-up Star



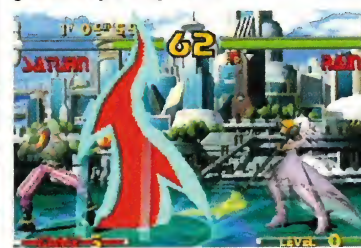
There are 22 characters to choose from at the start of the game. Should be enough to please most beat-'em-up fans...



PLASMA SWORD

group battle

Plasma Sword doesn't offer a huge number of different modes to play. In fact, there's only Arcade, Training and this, Group Battle. It's nothing new. The general idea is to choose a team of characters to fight another team, one at a time. As soon as one of your characters bites the bullet, the next one in line gives it a go. Not very exciting, really.



Gladiator. And it shows, right from the off. Graphically it's only marginally more advanced than some of the better PSX fighters, with flat shading and straight edges all round. Okay, the animation is much smoother and the visuals have a far brighter finish, but Dead Or Alive 2 and Soul Calibur won't be looking on jealously here. There are, of course, some nice graphical touches, like the special move effects and

on offer. There's a decent mix of organic, hi-tech and human fighters to choose from, all of which have their own particular quirks. Take Gore, for example; a hideous-looking mutant with a brain for a head that grows so that he can cop opponents with a more effective head-butt. Some of the hi-tech Gundam-style characters are also commendable, with their

DEAD OR ALIVE 2 AND SOUL CALIBUR WON'T BE LOOKING ON JEALOUSLY HERE

some incredibly deep and well drawn backgrounds. I really would expect more than this from Capcom and the Dreamcast, though.

Plasma Sword's real graphical saving grace doesn't come technically; it's the sheer amount of thought that's gone into the cool characters

heavy weaponry and menacing looks. If only more technical thought had gone into the cool character design, Plasma Sword could have come out smelling of graphical roses. Alas, compared to the Dreamcast benchmarks, it just doesn't make the grade.

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------|---------------|--------|----------------|--------------|
| Publisher | Virgin Interactive | Developer | Capcom | Origin | UK | Genre | Beat-'em-up |
| Available | Out Now | Players | 1-2 | Price | £39.99 | Contact | 0171 5514222 |



PLASMA SWORD



+
the story

Beat-'em-up stories are always the same. A group of tough-nuts have to do battle in order to save the planet/universe. And Plasma Sword is no different. Only this time the story isn't as grand. In fact, they've only gone and nullified the original Star Gladiator story. How? By saying Plasma Sword takes place only a year later, and the consequences of the original game were zero. This is the real battle to save the planet/universe. What a crock of shite.

One year has passed since the battle with the Fourth Empire.



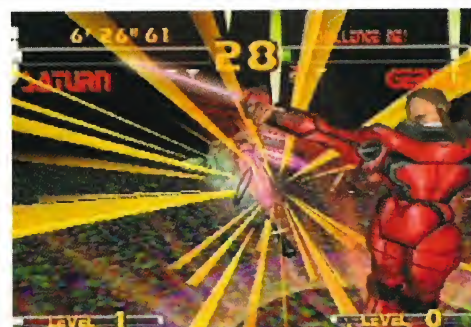
As you can see, some of the special moves are pretty spectacular.

Quality Brawling?

It's not all about graphics, though. After all, surely it's the quality of the brawling that seals a beat-'em-up's success, or not, as is the case here. There's nothing particularly wrong with the combat system, it's just that it has no flare, no spark – no punch, you might say. If this was

get. Then, when you're at maximum, you can unleash a devastating special move. Except on Plasma Sword these special moves aren't always devastating, as many can (very annoyingly) be blocked. Still, there's absolutely loads of them and most look pretty damn cool, especially as the camera changes and the background morphs to a colourful psychedelic blend.

The biggest problem with the combat on Plasma Sword isn't that it's been done before, or it lacks a certain punch, it's that it feels so unresponsive. Half of the time you just don't feel in control of your character. This is the biggest mistake a beat-'em-up can make. If players can't make a connection with their characters, what's the point? You don't want to find yourself



least a second to register your command, and on many occasions, nothing happens at all. Joypad out the window time.

Something Different, Please.

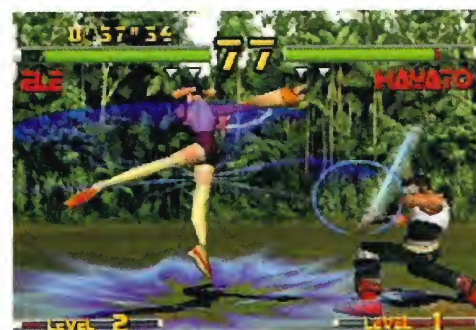
It's not looking good for Plasma Sword, but until Capcom get their finger out and stop resting on past victories, things aren't going to get better for them. Apart from that reaction-time gripe (well, more than a gripe), there's not actually anything drastically wrong here. There are plenty of special moves, and the combat is often fast-paced and frantic. There's even a dose of strategy to get your head around, if you want to become any good. The problem is, without making drastic advances, Capcom is never going to have a winner on its hands. Let's hope they try something different for their next beat-'em-up... **END**

THERE'S NOTHING PARTICULARLY WRONG WITH THE COMBAT SYSTEM, IT'S JUST THAT IT HAS NO FLARE, NO SPARK, NO PUNCH

Capcom's first attempt at a beat-'em-up of this style, you'd forgive them. But they've been flogging the same horse for too long now, and it's about time that they visited the stud farm and got themselves a new filly.

Each of the 22 characters has a vast array of basic manoeuvres and special moves with which to pummel the others to death, and pulling off the more devastating moves is relatively easy. The usual special meters apply – the more you hit your opponents, the more power you

frantically smashing the buttons because the screen reaction isn't what you intended. This gets very frustrating especially when using the A button to circle your opponent. It often takes at



Attempt Street Fighter-style movements on the D-pad and the results are usually pretty cool.

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VERDICT
Ultimately, another lazy attempt at producing the same game, just with a (slightly) different storyline and cast of characters. Which wouldn't be such a problem if the core materials were exceptional. Alas, they're not, and we've got yet another mediocre Capcom beat-'em-up. Can't wait for the next one...

5

Written By **Saul Trewern** saul.trewern@quaxnet.co.uk



THE JOYPAD DOES PRETTY MUCH WHAT YOU'D EXPECT OF IT, AND THE VMU SAVES YOUR GAMES. NO GREAT SURPRISES THERE...

COMING SOON...

Nightmare Creatures 2

KALISTO'S NIGHTMARE CREATURES II BOASTS THE SAME 3D FIGHTING ACTION, THOUGH ITS EMPHASIS ON MOVES AND TACTICS RATHER THAN SHEER WEIGHT OF NUMBERS MAKES IT A VERY DIFFERENT GAME.



INITIALLY...

ANYONE WHO'S PLAYED THE WOEFUL PSX VERSION OF GAUNTLET LEGENDS WILL NOTICE STRAIGHT AWAY THAT FOUR PEOPLE CAN PLAY THE DREAMCAST VERSION. AS MULTIPLAYER MAYHEM IS WHAT THIS GAME'S ALL ABOUT, THIS IS EXCELLENT NEWS. THAT'S NO IMMEDIATE CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM, THOUGH.

GAUNTLET LEGENDS

Can our four heroes out-fight, out-spell and out-shoot today's young pretenders? DCM follows them into the dungeon...

THE VMU SAVES YOUR GAME AND OFFERS A NASTY ILLUSTRATION OF YOUR CHOSEN CHARACTER. LOVELY.

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|--------|----------------|---------------|
| Publisher | Midway Games | Developer | Midway Games | Origin | UK | Genre | Action |
| Available | Out Now | Players | 1-4 | Price | £39.99 | Contact | 020 7938 4488 |



GAUNTLET LEGENDS



old and the new

The original Gauntlet released by Atari in 1985. It was 2D, and good fun. The new game is 3D and isn't. So much for progress. In the arcades, the original Gauntlet allowed four people to take a character each and battle through the dungeons, adding coins to increase their health. It was manic and mindless, but it worked far better than the update.



■ Hmm, no great graphical flights of fancy here...

GAUNTLET'S ENEMIES ARE AS FEEBLE AS ONE OF OUR EDITOR'S JOKES



■ Millions of enemies, all as weak as Birmingham City...

It seems so long ago. In 1985, in arcades around the country, a huge purpose-built coin-op boasting an enormous screen and space for four players (count 'em) appeared as if out of nowhere. No one ever played it on their own, but with a group of mates (or even complete strangers) there was nothing like taking control of one of the four battlers, helping out your colleagues when they were stuck and sharing the life-giving food – or did you ignore your colleagues when they were stuck and race to get to the food first? Friendships were made and destroyed in front of Gauntlet cabinets – who said videogames are antisocial?

Fifteen years later, the coin-op sequel of a couple of years back is finally converted to the home consoles. After a ridiculous, missing-the-point PSX effort which only allowed two players at any one time (aaarrrrghhhh!), it comes to a machine that can actually handle it. Gone is the 2D top-down perspective, replaced by a 3D roving camera. Gone are the flat dungeons, consisting of endless warehouse-like arenas criss-crossed by horizontal and vertical walls. Now, think Tomb

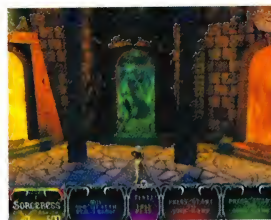
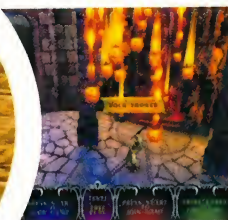
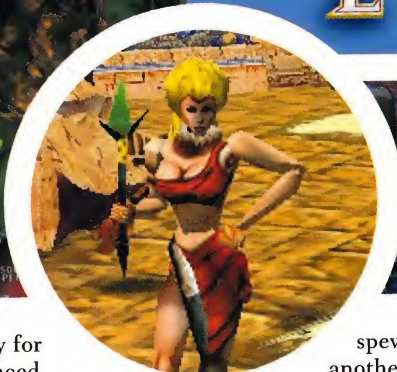
Raider or Soul Reaver – it's a fully-interactive 3D world, with platforms, stairs, haggard landscapes and – oh, you get the picture. The worlds no longer look like they could be reproduced in Lego. Still present is the non-stop action and the legion of monsters that charge you down with gay abandon.

Feeble Foes

Gauntlet's enemies are as feeble as one of our editor's jokes. Always were, and still are. Gauntlet (Legends or otherwise) depends on



GAUNTLET LEGENDS



quantity rather than quality for its difficulty. Thus you're faced with endless waves of baddies which take only one hit to kill, while they hardly dent your own health individually. It's like watching an army of ten-year-olds armed with daggers trying to over-run an SAS badass in a machine gun nest, or a swarm of bees trying to sting an elephant to death. The more you kill the more arrive, until you take out the monster generator that's

spewing them into the fray, another factor retained from the original. Along the way, you find keys to open chests and doors, and magic potions to increase your spell power, and yes, that's retained from the original too.

One thing that hasn't been retained is the 2D game's manic fun. Make no mistake – much of the 1985 game's retrospective appeal is due to fond memories growing fonder and, with videogames barely out of their infancy, lower expectations. It

could get annoyingly repetitive at times. However, it still had that 'just one more go' appeal that kept you coming back for more. Gauntlet Legends has not. Instead, it's just plain boring. You have a reasonable degree of control of your chosen character (and you can choose from eight now, not the original four), but in this day and age, the actions available to you seem very limiting. You can run to some degree, but can't jump or strafe. Five years ago you wouldn't notice, but with games like Soul Reaver and



It copies the original well...

ONE THING THAT HASN'T BEEN RETAINED IS THE 2D GAME'S MANIC FUN



GAUNTLET LEGENDS

+
party piece

Unlike the first Gauntlet, Gauntlet Legends lets you pick from eight characters. The original four are there, ie. the Warrior, Wizard, Valkyrie and Archer (the Elf renamed), but also present are the Jester, Dwarf, Knight and Sorceress. The difference between them is basically the balance between weapon and magic strength. Unlike in the original game, the characters can't hurt each other in the heat of battle. Pity - it sometimes caused real-life fights to break out in front of the old arcade cabinets.



Tomb Raider on the shelves, the difference is more obvious than one of our editor's jokes, and even less funny. It's like trying to piddle up a wall blindfolded, on one leg and with one hand behind your back.

Think Positive...

It's not all doom and gloom, though. Some of the find-a-switch-to-open-the-door puzzles are pretty good, as are the power-ups which increases your character's abilities. With an increase in speed and fire-power, the fighters move less sluggishly and you feel more comfortable with the controls, though it's still a little primitive. Between levels you can buy power-ups with the gold you win in the dungeons too. Unfortunately, only a short way into the game the switches are hidden behind breakable walls that look pretty-much

the same as any other wall, forcing you into a frustrating game of trial and error. The hit-and-run gameplay can be fun too, whereby you're constantly on the move, looking for space from where you can unleash your missile attacks. When in close, you automatically strike at any enemy within range, making even pressing the fire button unnecessary, though getting yourself into this situation is a recipe for disaster.

Gauntlet Legends really only comes into its own as a multiplayer game, where the pace increases and slugging it out with endless enemies becomes less tedious, but it's still not recommended. It's too samey, too tedious and too boring for anything other than occasional party play, but it's more fun when shared than when kept to yourself. Unlike one of Russell's jokes... **END**

**AFTER A RIDICULOUS, MISSING-
THE-POINT PSX EFFORT, IT
COMES TO A MACHINE THAT
CAN ACTUALLY HANDLE IT**



Written by Ian Osborne. Ian Osborne is a freelance writer.

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VERDICT

Gauntlet Legends does a great job of recreating the old Gauntlet atmosphere, but loses much of the fun in the translation. With any luck, the second volume of Midway's Arcade Classics will follow the first onto the Dreamcast - it contained the original Gauntlet...

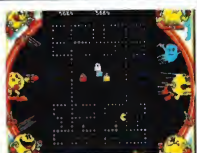
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THIS ONE DOES NOTHING BUT
SAVE YOUR HIGH SCORES. ZZZ.
NEEDS FIVE BLOCKS THOUGH...

COMING SOON...

Namco Museum Volume 1

HOT ON THE HEELS OF MIDWAY IS NAMCO WITH VOLUME 1 OF THEIR MUSEUM SERIES. GAMES INCLUDE PAC MAN, GALAGA, DIG DUG, POLE POSITION AND GALAXIANS.



Peripherals



JUST USE THE D-PAD. WELL, WHAT DID YOU EXPECT? THIS IS JUST A RETRO COMPILATION, AFTER ALL!



INITIALLY...

THESE GAMES ARE GREAT FOR INSTANT GRATIFICATION. WITH SIX ON THE REASONABLY-WELL-PRESENTED DISC THERE'S PLENTY OF VARIETY, THOUGH THE GAMES DIFFER LITTLE FROM LEVEL TO LEVEL. THE QUESTION REMAINS; DO THEY STILL EXCITE?

MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS VOLUME 1

In videogames, games released 18 years ago are ancient history, so can these arcade classics still satisfy?

MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS VOLUME 1

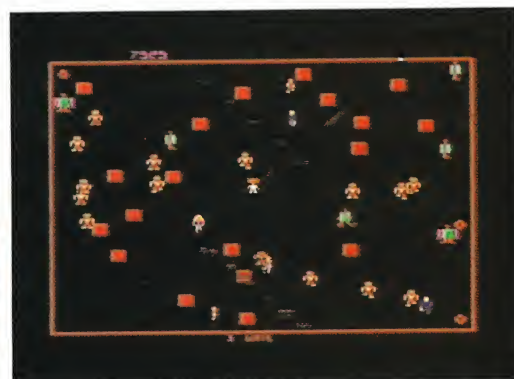
+ dip switches

Back in the early Eighties, gamers had endless arguments about whether the Defender coin-op in the chip shop was more difficult than the one in the cinema. Some believed they couldn't be changed and all Defender machines were the same, while others argued the owner could make them easier or trickier. By now, most people realise the second school of thought was correct – games can be tweaked using dip switches inside the cabinet, setting variables like how many lives the player got, how many points he needed for a bonus life, how difficult the game was, and so on. Well, these options are reproduced here too; just pause the game and the dip switch settings are yours.



Those were the days. 1982, summers by the seaside with the parents. Soon as I got out of the car, I made a bee-line for the amusement arcade, a dingy shed with cracked windows and endless prize bingo. Changing a £1 note (no quid coins then) for a fistful of ten pences, which I soon fed into the one-eyed monsters flashing primary colours. These were the arcade games of old, dinosaurs at the dawn of videogaming.

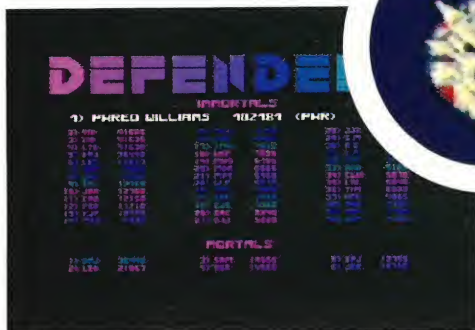
Technology has since moved on to the point where the contents of six arcade boards, which originally



■ Robotron 2084, spiritual ancestor of Smash TV and Apocalypse.

Let me explain. Joust sees you ride on the back of a war ostrich, jousting with other bird-riders. To better the baddies, you must collide with them while your lance is higher than theirs. If you collide while your weapon is lower, you're dismounted and a life is lost. The enemy attack patterns are predictable, but the effects of inertia and the size of the screen (no scrolling here) make this a tough task. Each level takes place on a single screen, with the platform structures changing every few levels.

This game still rocks after all these years, and is more than just a trip down memory lane, despite the awful scratchy sound effects.



IS THERE ANYONE OUT THERE WHO HASN'T PLAYED DEFENDER?

cost hundreds of pounds each, can be stored on a single Dreamcast disc and flogged for under £25, but are they still worth playing?

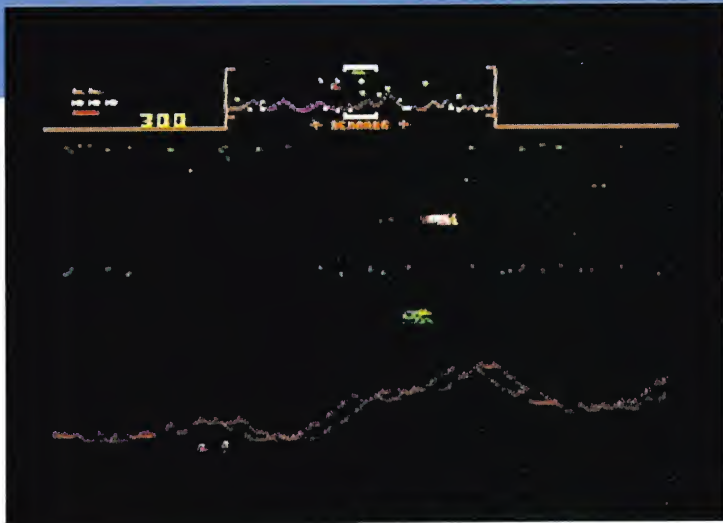
Let's start with one that certainly is. Joust, Williams' woefully-underrated masterpiece, allows you to get on the back of a long-legged bird and get your weapon out...

We Are The Robots...

Robotron 2084 produced a legion of imitators, most notably labelmate Smash TV and Activision's Apocalypse, both of which used its innovative control method to great effect. The direction buttons move your geezer around the single-screen arena (no surprises there), and the

MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS VOLUME 1

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------|----------------|-------------------|
| Publisher | Midway | Developer | Digital Eclipse | Origin | UK | Genre | Retro Compilation |
| Available | August 2000 | Players | 1-2 | Price | £24.99 | Contact | 020 7938 4488 |



THESE WERE THE ARCADE GAMES OF OLD, DINOSAURS AT THE DAWN OF VIDEOGAMING

argument for gameplay over graphics.

Alas, after these three great games, the compilation goes downhill somewhat. Take Defender II, for example. It's not that it's a bad game – more that it's practically the same game. Okay, a few new baddies have been added and the gameplay's been tweaked, but it's still not enough to justify calling it a different title. Besides, anyone fanatical enough about gaming history to want them both will probably collect arcade machines, not retro compilations.

It's a Sin...

Sinistar is another mixed blessing. The game took the Asteroids theme in directions it simply didn't need to go, with eight-way scrolling, a radar scanner and a curious shields system that allowed you to get hit for a while before toppling

your craft. It's also tediously difficult, with ridiculous inertia and gravity effects. I didn't like this one in the Eighties arcades and I don't like it now, but it does have a cult following.

Bubbles did nothing in the Eighties, and looks sad and decrepit now. It's hardly a piece of gaming history – I've yet to meet anyone who remembers it. For those who are interested, you guide a soap bubble around a sink full of water, cleaning up specks of dirt and avoiding various bits and pieces. Make sure you don't go down the plughole, which is where this pile of crap should be.

Midway's Greatest Arcade Hits Volume 1 is a mixed bag. It's not an essential purchase, except for gaming fanatics interested in owning a piece of their heritage. Paradoxically, if you need to read the review to find out about the games, Midway's Greatest Arcade Hits Volume 1 probably isn't for you... **END**

fire buttons all fire – the same weapon. In different directions. Imagine the lettered buttons were a D-pad – 'A' would be Down, 'B' would be Right, etc. Diagonals are achieved by pressing two buttons at once. What this means is you can run in one direction and fire in another, a really cool trick that makes for some serious dodge-n'-hit action. It's great fun, but too tricky by half, even on the easiest settings. The screen fills up incredibly quickly, leaving you so little breathing space it's untrue. Still, practise makes perfect, and at least you aren't paying 10p a go...

Is there anyone out there who hasn't played Defender? The world's first scrolling game, the program for it took up a then massive 9k of memory! How times change. One thing that hasn't changed over the years is the game's fast-paced action. You must defend a host of humans who hang around the foot of the screen, while aliens (who look very similar to those found in Space Invaders) swoop and pick up your buddies. If a foe gets a human to the top of the screen, the good guy is killed and the baddie turns into Super-Alien™! A radar shows the location of just about everything, and you can turn your craft around and fly the other way too – the screen scrolls right or left, though never up or down.

Defender is an all-time classic, and a great



■ Joust, one of the finest games of the Eighties. You'll believe an ostrich can fly...



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VERDICT

This is a piece of history, but it's not for everyone. The games can't compete on any level with today's top offerings, but they're fun in their own right and are arcade-perfect, offering tremendous nostalgia value.

6

Written By **Ian Osborne** ian.osborne@quaynet.co.uk

WIN!



Stacks of amazing Wacky Races merchandise must be won!



5
MINIATURES!!!



That's right, we've got five sets of excellent Wacky Races cuddly toys, beanies, miniatures, and Dreamcast games on offer, courtesy of those lovely people at Infogrames, and all you've got to do to win is answer our wacky question!

5
BEANIE
TOYS!!!



competition
dreamcast



Question

How many members are there in the Ant Hill Mob? Is it...

A 4

B 5

C 7

If you think you know the answer, simply jot it down on the back of a postcard, including your full name and address, sending it to us before the 30th August.

Send your entries to:

Wacky Competition,
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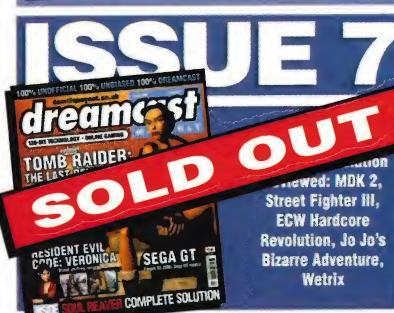
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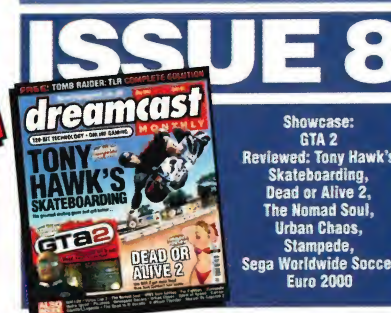
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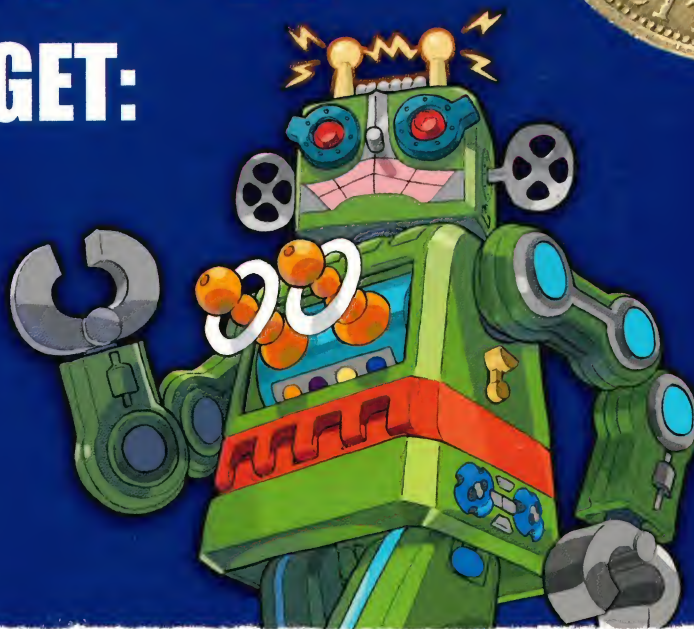
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BACK ISSUES

feature

HALF-LIFE

Q. pologies folks, it's rack-your-brains time. Remember a few issues ago when we told you what an exciting game Half-Life was set to be? Remember how we lusted after its engrossing narrative and needed restraining at the thought of spending hours in its company? If not, then at this minute you're hooking us into a clinic. However, for those who can act as alibis to our admiration, the news has got better. And hence we're revisiting the Half-Life phenomenon to bring you an especially exciting update on the Dreamcast version. You see, whilst even a preview copy of Half-Life hasn't yet been seen, what has been shown are videos demonstrating exactly how the game's going to run on the Dreamcast. And that footage, along with other pieces of information we've been made aware of, meant we simply couldn't wait to bring you up to date...

HALF-LIFE

YOU FEEL THE WORLD IS ALWAYS CHANGING AROUND YOU, RATHER THAN SPRINGING INTO LIFE WHEN YOU WALK BY



A brief recap for those new to Half-Life. Rated as one of the best games of all time on the PC (winning rave reviews on its original release in 1998), the game is, to this day, arguably the finest single-player first-person action game ever to be developed. That's not to say multiplayer is weak - far from it, in fact. But what's so special about Half-Life is the atmosphere it creates. You feel the world is always developing around you, rather than springing

into life when you walk by. You can interact with the many people, even eavesdrop on their conversations. Somehow the game manages to use this mechanism to drive both a complicated and utterly engrossing story, whilst bolting on one of the most playable action adventures of all time. Excited yet?

Thus far, the game has been a PC only experience, so when the Dreamcast port was originally announced, we started to get excited. However, what's clear at this stage is that the last thing



this could be called is a port, for the developers have taken the game and sought to build on it, without damaging the fabric of what made it so great.

but why?

By this time, you want examples. So here they are. First up, an exclusive new episode is being added to the Dreamcast version, under the working title of Guard Duty. Now it's not the hugest extra episode in the world, coming in at around a third of the size of the original game, but it does feature one of the security guards in his own adventure. Hence the title Guard Duty, we guess. The extra

BUT IT'S AN OLD PC GAME!

The most obvious criticism people are levelling at the DC version of Half-Life is the fact that the PC version will be two years old when we finally get it, and that we're getting everyone else's good games after them. We're not oblivious to the point, but in this case, we don't feel it applies. For starters, this isn't just a decent release transferring across (as the likes of Wild Metal and Wetrix have in recent months). This is still regarded as one of the best five games in the year. In single-player mode, nothing has topped it. Furthermore, the game's getting enhancements for the Dreamcast version to make it that bit more special, and it's a golden opportunity for the DC to show exactly how it can bring a two-year-old PC game to an up-to-the-minute console. So is it just another PC game? No. It's quite possibly THE PC game. Enjoy it.



WE'RE STOCKING UP ON EXTRA CONTROLLERS AND PREPARING OURSELVES FOR HALF-LIFE!





mission has been put together by Gearbox Software, who was responsible for the superb Half-Life: Opposing Force add on disc for the PC.

The team behind the main conversion itself is Captivation Digital Laboratories, whose previous Dreamcast work has included putting together promotional demos that launched the console into public minds back in 1998. Furthermore, until recently they had also been doing work for Sega on the online gaming side of things, which makes our 'But Will It Be Online?'



Infantry grunt

boxout all-the-more interesting.

Still, what the team has managed to do is offer another significant improvement, this time on the multimedia side. The Dreamcast is a more powerful beast than the PCs that were running Half-Life when it first appeared, and you notice this quickly by taking a look at some of the visuals from the game. The polygon count has been boosted, and the end result is that the Dreamcast version really is going to look like the nuts of the mutt. A crude analogy, but it does the job.

40 WHEN?

A quick recap then. A whole extra plotline exclusive to the Dreamcast. Better graphics than ever before. Possibly online play. And one of the best games of all time, coming to the DC. Currently, the game is scheduled for released around September/October time, when the Dreamcast big guns come out to play. And with an Autumn schedule that currently includes Samba di Amigo, Jet Grind Radio, Shenmue, Virtua Tennis, Black and White, Quake III Arena and now Half-Life, we can,

NEED HELP?

Don't panic about being landed slap-bang in the middle of the Half-Life world, with the expectations of the entire planet on your shoulders. It will be completely wiped out should you fail to complete the game, but no pressure. No, you get a chance to warm up thanks to the Training Mode, which thoughtfully puts you through your paces, whilst familiarising you with the workings of the game. Thoughtful, eh?



THE WORLD IS ALWAYS DEVELOPING AROUND YOU, RATHER THAN SPRINGING TO LIFE WHEN IT FIRST APPEARED



VALVE

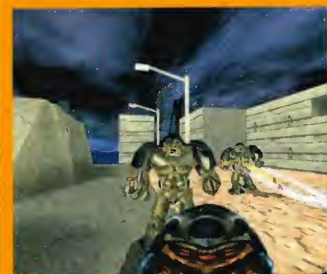


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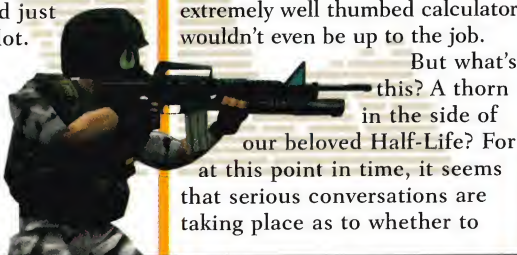
One further advantage to the Dreamcast version of the game is the extra time put in to the artificial intelligence. Thus, the various aliens who are invading are that bit cleverer than their PC counterparts. Look for the various creatures to come hunting for you in packs, and then split up to come and tan your arse when you're least expecting it. Which you'll no-doubt enjoy.



hand on heart, say that there has never ever been a better time to be a Dreamcast owner. Us? We're stocking up on extra controllers, filling the cupboards with food and drink and preparing ourselves for Half-Life. Because you know something? It could just be the best of the lot.

BUT WILL IT BE ONLINE?

As any self-respecting PC owner will tell you, Half-Life gains an



extra edge when you play it online against real human beings in Deathmatch Mode. Frankly, the amount of time lost and phone bills run up on this particular feature we dread to think, and certainly the boss's extremely well thumbed calculator wouldn't even be up to the job.

But what's this? A thorn in the side of our beloved Half-Life? For at this point in time, it seems that serious conversations are taking place as to whether to

include this side of the game at all, or whether to sacrifice it in order to get the damn thing on the shelves as quick as possible.

We say this. If Sega are serious about their online gaming policy, much though we appreciate Chu Chu Rocket and the fact they gave it us free, it's going to take something more than a game of cat and mouse to persuade us to go bashing other players after a couple of pints and a curry. If you catch our drift. Keep it in. And don't be such spanners.

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half-life

Q&A

Half-Life is looking really cool. Dreamcast Monthly spoke to Randy Pitchford, Director, Chief Designer, and asked just how it's coming on...

clm: The multiplayer levels – are they in or are out?

We can't really say very much about that at the moment, other than nothing official has been released about multiplayer functions. The world will just have to be patient!

clm: Will you be using the same characters as Half Life PC version?

Yes, although they've been worked on and are now much more detailed, so they move and look better. In Half-Life: Guard Duty (the new Half-Life episode which features Barney the security guard available with the Dreamcast version of the game), Barney does meet some interesting new characters.

clm: What about the soldiers? Are they in this version?

Of course. They're essential to both Half-Life and Guard Duty. The Dreamcast really shows off all the extra attention we've paid to the detail of these quite scary characters. Thanks to the extra dimensions of the machine, the soldiers look very real.

clm: How different will the weaponry be?

The actual weapons themselves will be the same. However, we've modified their appearances a little and the results are pretty impressive! The weapons are more detailed and are of a better quality - this shows up really well on the Dreamcast machine. I can't really tell you much more as I want to surprise everybody with how different the weapons will look!

clm: Are you able to tell us anything about how the story unfolds in Guard Duty?

We can't give you too much information, but it's safe to say you're vastly impressed by where Barney is at the moment the Half-Life accident occurs. You play Barney and start the game as



Gordon Freeman enters the building. Those of you who play the PC version know the rift between the Black Mesa Research Centre and Xen has not happened at this stage of the game, so Barney is none-the-wiser. You follow Barney through as the soldiers turn up for their cover-up job and aims to keep himself alive.

clm: What new features/levels/characters have you included in the Dreamcast version of Half-Life?

We've been developing an entirely new episode that's exclusive to the Sega Dreamcast. It's currently called Half-Life: Guard Duty, and the plot centres around the security guard character known as Barney. Players experience the action at the Black Mesa Research Facility from an entirely new perspective,

we've been developing an entirely new episode that's exclusive to the dreamcast

visiting all new areas of the base but interacting with familiar friends and enemies. Barney's last name is revealed for the first time too! This seems a big deal for the fans that helped make Half-Life the Game of the Year on the PC

(www.gameoftheyear.com). Guard Duty takes advantage of all of the upgrades we're applying to the Dreamcast version of Half-Life, so it looks even better than the original. Guard Duty is shorter than the original game, but it stands alone with all-new challenges, adventures and a plot of its own. So, Half-Life for Dreamcast,

with the included Half-Life: Guard Duty is a pretty big package - it's like getting two games for the price of one.

clm: How does it compare with the PC version?

Since the Dreamcast hardware outperforms the minimum system requirements of the original PC release, we're able to go in for a dramatically enhanced appearance for the game. Specifically, Gearbox Software has upgraded models with much greater resolution and articulation. When the new soldiers, enhanced for the Dreamcast, are compared with the soldiers from the original game, for example, you see much more detail in the weapons the soldier carries, the equipment attached to his belt and even details in the look on his face that couldn't exist in the original version. Most of the weapons have been upgraded, and some new weapons appear, like the M-4 machine gun with attached grenade launcher, or the Baretta automatic pistol.

We wanted this title to be much more than just a quick port, so all in all, the Dreamcast version is greatly enhanced from the PC version.

clm: Any difficulties using the Dreamcast joypad?

It's actually turned out to be quite intuitive. Of course, the final version will allow custom configuration options, and for players who have the PC version but want to enjoy the upgrades the Dreamcast version offers (or the new Guard Duty episode), the goal is to not only to support the Dreamcast keyboard, but also the various mouse peripherals on the horizon.



clm: How does the Dreamcast rate as a format to develop for?

The Dreamcast is a wonderful computer. It renders polygons quickly, it's got a modem in it and it's got a development path that's not too foreign for those of us who are used to developing for the PC. Of course, the technology behind Half-Life for Dreamcast is actually being programmed by Captivation Digital Laboratories. They know

the Dreamcast really shows off the extra attention we've paid to our new characters

the Dreamcast better than anyone, and have done some pretty impressive things with it so far.



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exclusive



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Silver is an excellent example of an Action RPG, but what does the term 'RPG' stand for?

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SILVER



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TIMESTALKERS

Clone Monsters

This trick allows you to clone a monster to give to a friend's game/save file, while keeping the original monster. Just follow these steps:

1. Make sure you're in the town area and your current character has the Moon Lighter or Moon Lighter S item with him or her.
2. Save your game at Sword's House and walk to the VMU machine in the Monster House.
3. Download the Moon Lighter or Moon Lighter S mini-game onto your VMU.

4. Download the monster you want onto the VMU.

5. After it has finished downloading, exit the Monster House. WITHOUT SAVING, turn the game off.

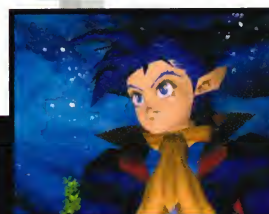
6. Turn the game on and select your friend's save file. Go to the Monster House and load the monster from the VMU into the game. If done correctly, both save files should have a copy of the same monster!

Hidden Artwork on Disk

As with many other DC games, if you place the GDROM into your PC CDROM Drive, you can find wallpaper on the disc.

Keep Downloaded Mini-Games

When you buy one of the super-expensive mini-game items,



you can only use it once. However, there is a way to keep them. First, download the game onto your VMU. Then, WITHOUT SAVING, turn the game off. If done correctly, you should have the mini-game on your VMU, and still have the item in the game. NOTE: If you did not save when you bought the mini-game item, you will keep the money you used to pay for it, making it free! The game will be on your VMU either way!

Lots of Cash or Tokens

Make sure you have a VMU mini-game that stores tokens on your VMU. Now save your game at Sword's house. Then go to the nearest shop and sell all of your items. (sell legendary items to the rabbit guy). Then go to the monster house and buy as many tokens as you can and put them on your VMU. Now turn the system off and reload your save. You will have all of your stuff back but still have the tokens on your VMU. Do this as many times as you want and either sell the tokens for cash or trade them for good items.

REVOLT



All Cars

Enter "CARNIVAL" as a name.

All Tracks

Enter "TRACKER" as a name.

Cycle Through Weapons

Enter "SADIST" as a name, then press **← + →** while playing a game.

Gameshark Codes

Infinite Tries P1
3401263E00000003.

Upside-Down Track

To turn the track upside down, hit **← + → + ↓** at the selection screen.

WACKY RACES

Unlock the Wacky Cheats

Drive up to the Central Signpost and select Cheats. Select the Enter Code choice and enter these codes:

BARGAINBASEMENT -

to unlock all abilities

WACKYGIVEAWAY - to unlock all tracks and bosses

WACKYSPILERS -

to unlock all cars. Then go to Code Collection to activate them.



MDK 2

Detached Camera

While the game is paused, press the **X** and **Y** buttons together. This removes the pause menu, and gives you an obstruction-free view of the spinning slow-mo effect.

Fun with Flatulence

Doctor Hawkins needs a new diet. At anytime while playing the Doctor, press the following combination of keys. Left and right trigger, **←** and **A**. Press all these at the same time and watch Doc Hawkins do something 'nasty'.

Funny MP3s

Just as the game has hidden artwork on the disc, there are a couple MP3s featuring outtakes from the game, as well as silly songs created by the development team.

Hidden Artwork

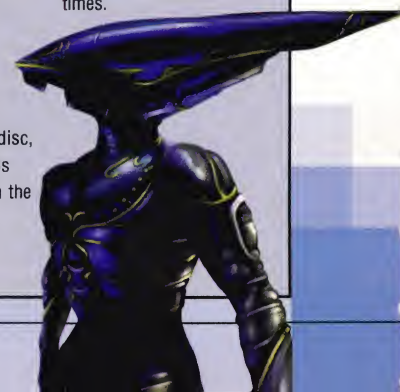
Put the disc into your CDROM drive to find hidden artwork and .wav files on the disc.

Kurt in Boxer Shorts

Hold **← + →** and press **X, X, Y, X** at the main menu.

Matrix Mode

To get the Matrix Mode (which is just a slow motion mode), play as Max the dog. Then hold the **R** trigger and press **↑** on the D-Pad four times.



BUST-A-MOVE 4



Get a Tarot Reading

Finish Story Mode. On at the title screen, press **↑, X, ↓, X, ↑**. If this is done correctly, a tone will sound. Go to the options screen to access this new option.

Unlock Extra Puzzles

At the title screen, press **X, ←, →, ←, X**. If this is done correctly, a tone will sound. Then go to Puzzle Mode and select Arcade to access these new levels.

Extra Characters

At the title screen, press **→, →, X, ←, ←**. If this is done correctly, a tone will sound.

Check out the Talk Demo

After successfully entering the extra characters and Tarot reading codes, go to the title screen. Press **X, ↑, ←, ↓, →, ↑, X, ↓, ←, ↑, →, ↓ + X**. If this is done correctly, a tone will sound. Go to the options screen to access this new option.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2



Alternate Costumes

Highlight a character and then press **Y** or **A** at the selection screen.

Select the First Fighter in a Fight

Usually the top fighter will begin the fight. But if you hold **←**, the second fighter will start the match, and if you hold **→**, the last fighter will start the match.

Buy Cheaper Hidden Characters

Continue to exit and enter the secrets shop until the price of the characters begins to fall.



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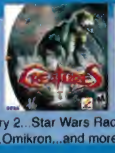
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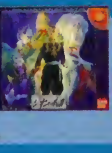
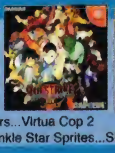
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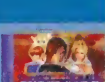
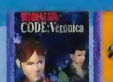
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Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

6

Being the first flight sim to grace the Dreamcast format, you'd expect its creator to go all out and try and set a standard high enough to make competitors quake in their collective boots. Alas, Crave opted for the 'bang it out in time for Chrimbo' approach, leaving quality as a mere afterthought. Basic graphics, bog standard gameplay and a bastard challenge await Red Arrow fans everywhere, so unless you go to Farnborough every year, steer well clear.



ARMADA

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5

7

You're thrown into the thick of the action from the start and it takes a while to get into the swing of things. Kill enemy ships to collect money to buy weapons, and become the best fighter pilot since Hans Solo graced the starry skies. Your eyes will have to be looked at after a few hours of play, as the graphics and principles behind the game could leave you seeing stars. This will be one of those misunderstood games that no one thinks about buying and all we can say is - pity.



BLUE STINGER

Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

8

In Sega's efforts to ensure all genres were covered on launch day, Blue Stinger was on call to cover the action/adventure end of the operation. It's no Resident Evil, of that there's no doubt, but what it offers is a strong, character driven game with all the elements to make it a strong back catalogue title. Forgive the slightly dodgy control system and you've got a game to keep you going while you're waiting for Res Evil Code: Veronica.



BUGGY HEAT

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

5

How could Sega do it? Surely they wouldn't rely on the new technology behind Dreamcast to sell a hunk of junk masquerading as a decent game? Well it looks like they did and Buggy Heat is that hunk of junk: graphically uninspired and fundamentally flawed in both control and challenge. We'd like to think that Sega look back on this and hang their heads in shame. 'Why did we put our name to this pile of poo?' they'll say.



BUST-A-MOVE 4

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 12

7

Playing Bust-a-Move 4 is kind of like picking up women - either you've got it, or you ain't. Of, course, if we were to be politically correct, we'd compare it to a crossword - either you can do it, or it's straight over your head (but that's boring). As the title suggests, the series

has been with us for quite some time now and enjoys a status comparable to Tetris in its addictiveness. If you like your puzzle games, you're going to love this. 'Nuff said.

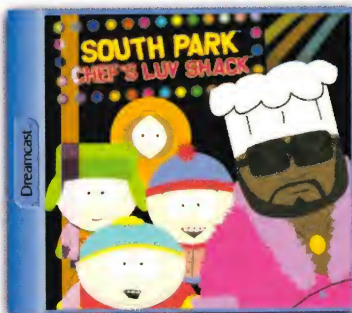


CHEF'S LUV SHACK

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 3

6

It contains all the voices of the crazy South Park crew, perfect cartoon animation and all the comedy touches that made the series the success it is. But... It's just a bloody quiz game with a few mildly amusing sub-games stuck on the side. In its defence, it's a great way to end an evening down the pub (as long as you're a fan) and it is available at a slightly knocked down price. But that's your lot.



CHU CHU ROCKET

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 10

8

Let's not dwell on the fact that Chu Chu Rocket looks awful. Though the 2D levels are plain, the mice and cats lack decent animation and presentation all round is minimal, none of this matters one little bit, because the gameplay is tremendously addictive. Don't be misled by the, 'If the graphics aren't much, then neither is the game' school of thought. The look helps, but that's everything; remember that. Approach Chu Chu Rocket as you would a girlfriend – not much to look at, but great fun underneath.



CRAZY TAXI

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 8

9

Possibly the best arcade conversion yet! Crazy Taxi doesn't just mirror the arcade version perfectly and have equally beautiful graphics, it also has added game modes for some extra longevity. Steer your cab round heavy traffic with haste and



PURE UNADULTERATED QUALITY GAMING, WITHOUT QUESTION!

precision and your tips will come flying in. Deal with angry punters on time, and your name will be in the number one rankings spot before you know it. Pure unadulterated quality gaming, without question. Buy it or you won't be able to call yourself a Dreamcast gaming guru!



DEADLY SKIES

Publisher: Konami
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 6

5

Another flight sim is offered up and we're afraid to say it doesn't go anywhere no-one's been before. The graphics are dull (with the exception of the replays that is), the action takes place at almost a snail's pace and there are splendid features that were in the import version that have been carelessly taken out. The missions aren't exactly inspiring either. Maybe the aviation enthusiasts out there will be pleased with the wide range of jet fighters on offer but there's really nowt else to keep you occupied through the evenings. Stick with Incoming for now in the hope that some developer, somewhere, is working on a fast and furious sky battle which really gets the adrenaline pumping.

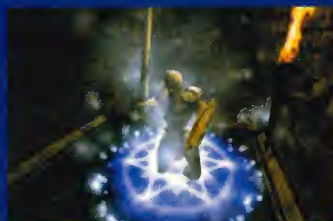


DRAGON'S BLOOD

Publisher: Virgin/Interplay
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 10

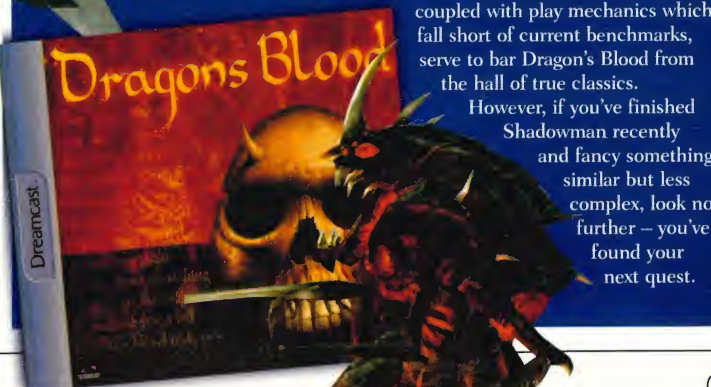
7

Those who persevere with this discover a tidy, atmospheric game which sports some beautiful touches hiding behind a fairly thin veil of unfriendliness. The mist which enshrouds the combat system never



quite lifts, even when proficiency and familiarity develop, and this, coupled with play mechanics which fall short of current benchmarks, serve to bar Dragon's Blood from the hall of true classics.

However, if you've finished Shadowman recently – and fancy something similar but less complex, look no further – you've found your next quest.



DYNAMITE COP

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

6

Another terrible embarrassment for Sega here, with not enough in its defence to save it from various EB bargain bins around the country. Though there's an abundance of different moves and combos on offer, there just aren't enough stages to keep any player entertained for more than a couple of hours. Multiplayer mode might warrant another bash, but half an hour later you're going to be done. Don't cause your wallet any unnecessary pain – it's just not worth it.



directory

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Publisher: Sega

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 9

9

Yet another little gem from Sega. Just when you thought that all the Dreamcast titles were either arcade, PC or PSX conversions, in comes a truly unique title. Controlling Ecco himself, you have to defend the future from an evil force that's trying to turn your tranquil oceanic world into chaos. Boasting some of the most stunning graphics we've yet seen from the Dreamcast, Ecco's gameplay will ensnare you for hours. Well worth buying.



ECW Hardcore Revolution

Publisher: Acclaim

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 7

7

It's good, but not great. Although it's streets ahead of the rushed-out PlayStation port WWF Attitude, it's still pretty obvious the game engine was written for a less powerful machine and tweaked. There are plenty of moves and weapons that cause serious physical pain, like cheese graters, shovels and ladders. You won't be disappointed if you buy it, but it won't be long before another Dreamcast grappler blows it out the ring.



EVOLUTION

Publisher: Ubi Soft

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 5

4

Hmmmm, a bit of a disappointment, then. It's frustrating to see old-style role playing games when the Dreamcast gives developers the opportunity to deliver games such as Shenmue. Cartoon-style characters, turn-based battle scenes, monsters, minions and spell casting – classic. As long as you like that kinda thing. So, it received the not-so-good score of four out of ten, a pity as some gamers like the traditional RPG formula, but the best is surely yet to come.



F1 WORLD GP

Publisher: Video Systems

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

6



Video Systems have had several successes on the PSX and N64 but F1 World GP on the Dreamcast really isn't going to join those ranks. There are several reasons for this (including twitchy controls and bog standard graphics), but the biggest and most unforgivable is the slowdown that occurs with heavy traffic. Monaco GP doesn't have that problem, so why should this? The Dreamcast is capable of so much more.

FIGHTING FORCE 2

Publisher: Eidos

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 4

8

While not as easy on the eye as luscious Lara Croft, Hawk Manson (star of Fighting Force 1 and 2) offers some sharp moves, a cool first-person mode and loads of macho attitude. Though at heart the game's a scrolling beat-'em-up, FF2 has some adventure elements to keep you on your toes. Graphically speaking it offers some excellent locations for fisticuffs but is let down at times by bland opponents. It's not gonna win any awards, but it's got more than enough to keep fans of the genre happy until the likes of Soul Reaver hits the street.



4 WHEEL THUNDER

Publisher: Midway

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 9

8

This Midway title puts Sega's buggy effort to shame, letting you race with some funny looking vehicles around both indoor and outdoor courses. There are loads of game modes to choose from, as well as some multiplayer mayhem. You'll no doubt notice its similarity to Hydro Thunder, with the most obvious comparison being the four and nine second turbos you collect as you race. This is definitely a contender in the race for best DC driving title, but the thing is, we've got V-Rally 2 coming later, challenging Crazy Taxi for pole position.



FUR FIGHTERS

Publisher: Acclaim

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 10

8

There's simply hours of gameplay to be had from Fur Fighters, and a large proportion of that time can be spent hunting around for your babies and wondering where you last saw the teleport with the appropriate character inside for the baby you accidentally discovered about half an hour ago. But to be honest, that's this title's only fault. If you like killing off endangered species and rescuing babies, coupled with some fun puzzles and crazy characters, you have no problem getting down to business with this title. Have fun.

YOU'LL HAVE NO PROBLEM GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS



GTA 2

Publisher Take 2 Interactive
Players: 1 • **Reviewed:** Issue 9

9

Pure, unadulterated illegal driving. Run over pedestrians, drive on the wrong side of the road, steal a truck load of cars - the sky's the limit. This has to be one of the most controversial titles ever to come out on a console (along with Carmageddon), but it's always the games parents and MPs hate that make for good gaming. The humour's straight out of the gutter too and the superb soundtrack adds extra appeal. Can we fault this title? Probably not. Simply

put, this game offers the kind of uncomplicated and addictive gameplay that stops you from ever wanting to put down your controller, and that's what gaming's all about, right?

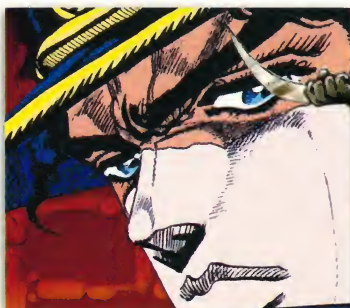


JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE

Publisher Capcom
Players: 1-2 • **Reviewed:** Issue 7

7

Whilst Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure is certainly based on the classic Street Fighter series in terms of both look and gameplay, it quickly veers off into new territory and becomes a genre-blurring adventure of epic proportions, where the fights actually have a purpose. You'll find yourself on an epic journey of discovery, during which a plethora of varied game styles are utilised. One minute you'll find yourself in a simple one-on-one bout against a human opponent and the next minute you'll be playing poker in a swanky casino. No, really.



HYDRO THUNDER

Publisher Midway
Players: 1-2 • **Reviewed:** Issue 3

7

With the Dreamcast already being over-run with various types of driving games, Midway had to come up with something different and there's no doubt they managed it with Hydro Thunder. Super speedboat racing, complimented with super cool graphics and sound FX, really gets things off on the right foot. But having only one game mode and frustrating gameplay kind of levels things out though. Moments of genius and hair tugging alike.



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

Publisher Eidos
Players: 1 • **Reviewed:** Issue 6

9

Wow! Move over PlayStation version of this game and make way for the capabilities of the Dreamcast. Right from the intro sequence, you can see this title is going to offer something special. The graphics, chilling storyline and sound effects add to the gameplay and bring this title on a par with such DC titles as Shadow Man and Resident Evil - now that's what we're talkin' about. Expect loads of puzzles, some a little more challenging than others, and a constant plot movement that just pulls you in. Stop the praise now, it's sickening. If you've never encountered Soul Reaver, now is a good time to introduce yourself.



INCOMING

Publisher Infogrames
Players: 1-2 • **Reviewed:** Issue 1

8

Incoming represents the upside of direct PC ports. It's good looking, very playable and probably more suited to a console anyway. What it lacks in tactical depth it makes up for with arcade style action. Loners may find it a little repetitive, but split-screen mode works well and as a post-pub blast it's hard to beat. With stripped-back gameplay that's light on its feet and heavy on visual action, Incoming's a cheery bimbo who's so pretty you can't help but love her. A real must for flight sim fans.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM

Publisher Virgin Interactive
Players: 1-2 • **Reviewed:** Issue 3

7

On a console well known for its leading 3D fighters, 2D battles on. And with more shine and variety than Street Fighter Alpha 3, MVC is perhaps the best of the bunch. The 15 cartoon super heroes will take a splendidly long time to master and there's no shortage of big spangly moves. An all-new four-player tag-team option is also a great bonus. The controls can take some getting used to, but as 2Ds go, it's a bit of a Marvel (and a bit of a Capcom as well).



JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

Publisher Virgin Interactive
Players: 1-2 • **Reviewed:** Issue 3

8



Cueball's developers, Awesome, have almost lived up to their name with this splendid snooker simulation. Obviously it doesn't test the Dreamcast's powers, but the physics are spot on, and the graphics genre-leading. The game suffers a little without the aid of a mouse, but play still runs smoothly enough. As our only current sim, it's out on its own and endlessly entertaining, not unlike Jimmy himself.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2

Publisher Virgin Interactive
Players: 1-2 • **Reviewed:** Issue 10

8

Another 2D beat-'em-up for the taking, only this one's the best of the lot. There's plenty more characters thrown into the ring, and the controls have been altered to make them a lot more intuitive on the Dreamcast's pad. There's plenty more combo moves to master for all the characters. Capcom have really excelled themselves with this one. Even if you're not really a fan of the genre, it's worth renting from Blockbusters for the evening.



directory



MDK 2

Publisher Interplay

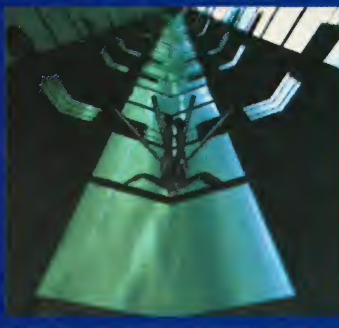
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 7

9

The first MDK title was good, but this one's better. Not only do you get to control the old hero Kurt, but also Max (remember him?) and the mad inventor Dr Hawkins. The graphics are (put simply) amazing and the environments you explore are massive.

All the weapons from the original are still there, as well as some new ones to get to grips with. This'll keep you amused for weeks, and then some. Definitely one of the Dreamcast's best adventure games yet.

DEFINITELY ONE OF THE DREAMCAST'S BEST ADVENTURE GAMES YET

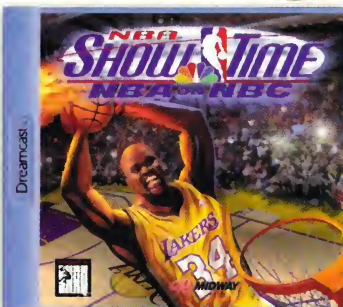


NBA SHOWTIME

Publisher Midway

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4

4



As a direct port from the classic NBA Jam arcade series, there's plenty of simple button bashing fun, and a top-notch multiplayer mode. Unfortunately the game hasn't been sufficiently tweaked to suit the needs of the more demanding console player, especially when that console is the Dreamcast. There's a distinct lack of options and the graphics are substandard. With four players the game really comes to life, otherwise there's just no pulse.

NFL BLITZ 2000

Publisher Midway

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4

8

A splendid arcade style title that does away with complicated plays and lets you straight into the action. And the control system mirrors this simplicity, using only three buttons for a wide variety of actions. Graphically it's less inspiring, but with such rich and smoothly flowing gameplay, who cares? As any toothless player will tell you, it's beauty on the inside that counts, and Blitz 2000's bursting with it.



MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE

Publisher Infogrames

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 1

8

Expendable veers away from the current fashion for 3D shooters. Its developers, Rage, aimed to recreate the best elements of classic shooters like Ikari Warriors and Commando, and they've mainly succeeded. Deep it ain't, and it could have been prettier, but there's plenty of heavy blasting action to disperse life's little stresses. Get a mate to fight alongside you and you've got yourself a much better game.



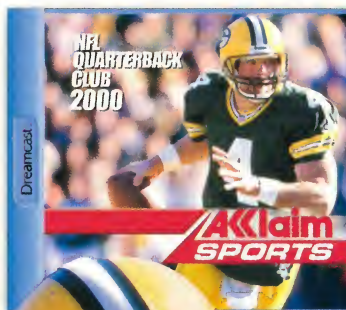
NFL QUARTERBACK

Publisher Acclaim

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4

7

Where Blitz 2000 is a big dumb (but good) blocker, Quarterback is a more sophisticated, well, Quarterback. Exhibition, Playoff, Season, Historic Sim, Custom Sim and Practice modes allow you to recreate all the game's complexities to an impressive degree. So if you're looking for a hard-core sim, this one's for you. Otherwise look left a couple of inches, and save yourself a lot of hassle.



MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

Publisher Midway

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: How we have

4

When DCM had to rank all the Dreamcast games of 1999, war broke out. With Soul Calibur at hand, the number one placing was easy, but the lowest position, number forty-one, was a different matter. How do you decide which is the worst of two games with no redeeming features? Well, somehow MKG managed to fend off Psychic Force 2012, but all this means is that it's less exceptional at being crap. Even worse than the film.



NHL 2K

Publisher Sega

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 10

7

NHL2K is an impressive hockey game which should find favour with enthusiasts as well as more arcade-minded players. It's easy to pick up, but tough to master. It's good in single-player Tournament Mode and has plenty of multiplayer fun to boot!

Whether you're looking for a five-minute shoot-fest or are ready for a whole season of hockey fun, NHL2K is recommended. N-ice.



PEN PEN

Publisher: Infogrames
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 3 **7**



If mutated penguin racing is your game, this'll be right up your street. It's one of those weird concepts that just doesn't make sense outside of Japan. Anyway, just for the record there are seven Pen Pens, twelve tracks and a multiplayer mode for those willing to disclose their ownership to others. I don't know, maybe I just don't get it. Maybe there's a hidden message, like that song: Lucy in the Sky, with Diamonds...



RACING SIMULATION: MONACO GRAND PRIX

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1 **7**

Isn't it frustrating how the Japanese get everything first? Well Monaco GP presents one of those rare occasions when we actually benefit from the delay. The once bland game received a vital face-lift before its UK launch, and now looks superb. The lack of a licence means true F1 fans might feel a little lost, but there are plenty of redeeming features. Simulation Mode is impressively realistic and Arcade Mode instantly playable. A pretty good start as the Dreamcast's premiere sim.



POWER STONE

Publisher: Eidos
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1 **8**

Power Stone is a must for all beat-'em-up fans. If you don't already know, it's a one on one fighter with a difference. A series of three different gems appear periodically around the screen. Grabbing them (or beating them out of your opponent) enables you to unleash a wider range of attacks. Backgrounds are also highly interactive and there's a large arsenal of weapons to be found. The only problem with this game is Soul Calibur, which is better.



RAYMAN 2

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 6 **9**



This may be some people's idea of a cutesy platformer but we say otherwise. What Sonic Adventure was lacking (which wasn't a lot), Rayman 2 more than makes up for. Stunning graphics and a Spyro-inspired soundtrack blend easily with the constantly evolving gameplay seen throughout. The characters themselves are distinguished perfectly through their distinct personalities, and the puzzles, tasks, bosses and sheer variety will keep you amused for weeks, possibly days (depending on how immersed you are). Don't miss out on the next generation of the 3D platform genre.

RED DOG

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 8 **6**



'Bang, bang, rat-a-tat-tat, you're dead.' That's about the size of most action shoot-'em-ups these days, and Red Dog is no exception. You won't find an intro to the plot before the 'bang, bang, pow, cabang' comes into play. Instead Red Dog simply dumps you into a vague, future based fracas and leaves you to make your way through the game with the occasional mission objective and tank upgrade in your path.

It's kind of like dating the prettiest girl in school. She doesn't 'alf look nice, but when it comes down to the nitty gritty she just doesn't deliver.

PSYCHIC FORCE 2012

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Not worth it **4**

Oh dear, Potato seem to have had a fair few problems with their Dreamcast debut. It's awkward, ugly and quite frankly, crap. A benchmark in failure. As much fun as stepping in doggy doos, slipping up, and then falling in it. Am I getting through? Its main achievement was being voted the worst game on the Dreamcast in '99. Let's hope it retains that lowly title for many years to come.



RE-VOLT

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4 **8**

Twenty toy cars have Re-Volted against their captors and made for a pretty creative racing game. The PlayStation version was at best unremarkable but 96 extra bits have made all the difference. There are 20 cars altogether and a wealth of weapons including water bombs, fireworks, turbos, oil and electrical charges which drain your opponents' batteries. There are slight glitches with the handling, but a big bag of original touches puts Re-Volt in a league of its own.



directory

READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING

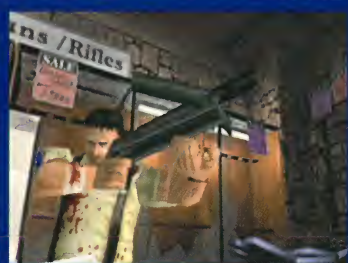
Publisher: Sega

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

9

The game that made the Dreamcast's launch rumble. This was the only title to really fight its corner in the all format charts, and for many good reasons. Each cartoon-like boxer is superbly animated and full of character, making competitive matches that little bit more personal. In Championship Mode you get a gym and three characters to train. But look, this game's just way too big to be summed up here, so go the distance down to the shops and you'll come back a winner.

THE GAME THAT MADE THE DREAMCAST'S LAUNCH RUMBLE



RESIDENT EVIL 2

Publisher: Virgin Interactive

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 5

7

It's already had its day on the PlayStation and now for some reason Virgin have decided to keep the momentum going on the Dreamcast before we're treated to Code Veronica. There's probably no need to tell you that it will always have a special place in all of our hearts, but there's just nowt new to get your teeth into. All the characters are still there, namely Claire Redfield, and the Umbrella Corporation is still up to its old tricks. Need we say more? Get yourselves a copy if you've never before experienced what is 'Res Evil', otherwise bide your time folks - it'll be worth the wait.



RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

Publisher: Eidos

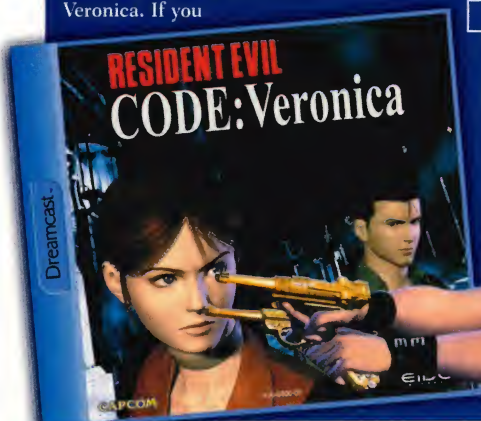
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 10

9

This is a title not to be missed. If you love jumping out of your seat with fright, coupled with immersive and action-packed gameplay, you can't go far wrong with Code Veronica. If you

love being gripped to your seat almost as much as you like jumping out of it with fright, Code Veronica keeps you hooked. We were glad the adventure carried onto a second disc, as we never wanted it to end. This is easily the best Resident Evil yet; anyone for another?

THIS IS EASILY THE BEST RESIDENT EVIL



SEGA BASS FISHING

Publisher: Sega

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 3

9

128 bit technology, online gaming and, er, fishing. But not just any old fishing. This is undoubtedly the most comprehensive, realistic and enjoyable fishing game ever. Arcade Mode involves catching as many bass as you can in one of three areas: Lodge, Cape and Inlet. Original Mode allows you to take part in the SBFA Amateur Tournament, including five stages set during morning, noon and evening. Leave your wellies in the loft and give Sega Bass a go - I guarantee it'll reel you in.



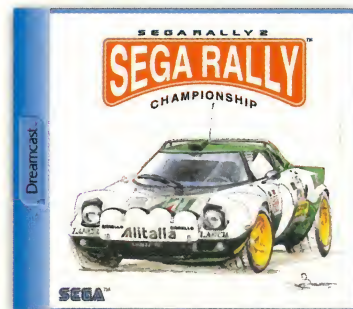
SEGA RALLY 2

Publisher: Sega

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1

8

Sega's flagship racer is everything you'd expect, with heaps of cars and tracks and gloriously sharp graphics. There are loads of nice touches, including ostriches running across the tracks and onlookers playing chicken with your car. Slowdown, although rare, is evident and there could have been more of a challenge, but these factors barely detract from one of Sega's many leading arcade experiences. This will always remain a classic.



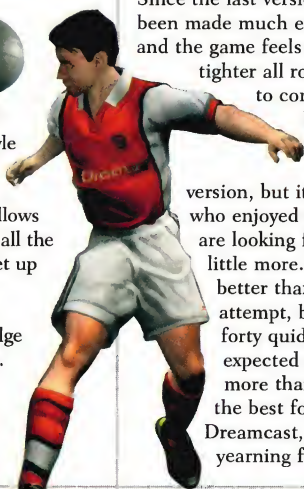
SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4

8



After UEFA Striker's delay, Sega Worldwide Soccer 2000 has come along and given it a kick in the shins. It's a cool marriage of the SWWS series' arcade style and Silicon Dreams' more sophisticated approach. While a quick start option allows you straight into the action, all the options are there. You can set up the camera, select the environment, teams, tournaments, and even indulge in customisation procedures. With intuitive controls and genre-leading graphics, SWWS is firmly the Dreamcast favourite.



SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000 EURO

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5

7



Since the last version, things have been made much easier to get into, and the game feels that little bit tighter all round. It's not going to convert those who had major problems with the previous version, but it does reward those who enjoyed SWWS 2000 and are looking for something a little more. It's good, and it's better than Sega's last attempt, but for another forty quid we'd have expected something a little more than this. It's arguably the best footie game on Dreamcast, but still leaves us yearning for ISS Evolution

SLAVE ZERO

Publisher: Infogrames
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5

8

Infogrames are just pulling out those decent games right left and centre at the moment. Showcased in issue 5, Slave Zero is a feast for your eyes. You take control of a 60-foot biomechanical war machine in order to put an end to an evil dictator's cunning mission to take over the city of S1-9. Loads of destructive weaponry, 13 levels and graphics to salivate over – what more could we possibly want? Online playability perhaps? Four players can have a bash at Deathmatch mode, which will suffice. A worthy score for such an action-packed game.



SNOW SURFERS

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 2

6

Following the success of the PlayStation trilogy, the Dreamcast should have taken Cool Boarders to another level. Unfortunately something has gone very wrong, and the UK version has been renamed Snow Surfers. There are seven courses altogether – pretty meagre compared to Cool Boarders 3's 36. On top of this the game's music and image is generally more 'acceptable' than 'cool'. Graphically it's top drawer, but there just isn't enough depth or playability to warrant the asking price.



SHADOW MAN

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 4

9

You play the part of a student-turned-assassin who has been given the chance to atone for his sins by saving mankind from impending doom. Armed with various weapons and devices you can blast and flame your enemies and even look them up in secret FBI files. The character movement has been noticeably improved since earlier versions, with quicker responses and less slugging around. If you can handle an irritating camera and a big dose of trial and error, you'll quickly find yourself trapped in this wonderfully hideous world.



SILVER

Publisher: Infogrames
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 10

7



Silver is a competent game, but not a masterpiece. The overall game construction is good, the scenery beautifully rendered and the voice-overs brilliantly acted. It's great to see developers using the Dreamcast's unique power to offer gamers something other than a tweaked PlayStation offering, but fiddly flaws and an overall lack of outstanding characterisation means it falls short of greatness. There's a huge potential for Silver II, though.



SONIC ADVENTURE

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 1

9

Sega's flagship 'hog returns in his first 3D adventure, with splendid success. Aside from Sonic there are five characters to control, each with their own tailored abilities. There are three massive adventure areas to explore: Station Square, Mystic Ruins and the Egg Carrier (Dr Robotnik's space ship). Despite unfortunate technical glitches, including an irritating camera, Sonic has firmly recaptured his post at the forefront of platform and adventure gaming.



SOUL CALIBUR

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1

9

Probably the best beat-'em-up in the World. No, just kidding, this IS the best beat-'em-up in the World, and by quite some distance. Having ruled the PlayStation with their Tekken and Ridge Racer series, Namco have already established themselves as masters of the next generation. Soul Calibur is simply the most playable, challenging and graphically awesome game ever! If you haven't already got it, well, I don't know why we bother.



directory

SOUL FIGHTER

Publisher: Mindscape

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 3

8

After the disappointment of Dynamite Cop, the Dreamcast was still in need of a decent scrolling beat-'em-up and Soul Fighter fits the part nicely. Choose either a warrior, a magician or a girlie, ignore the sketchy plot and kick some serious monster arse. The lack of a two-player mode is a real downer, but there's plenty of challenge, which goes some way to making up for it. A great example of old school action polished up by your Dreamcast.



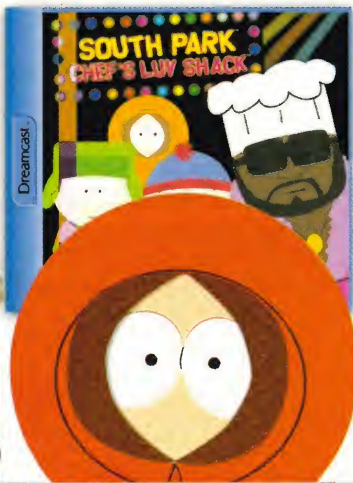
SOUTH PARK RALLY

Publisher: Acclaim

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 12

7

Postponed several times and tweaked a few more, you'd be forgiven for thinking South Park Rally is the burned-out banger of the driving genre. You would, however, be wrong. Well mostly. As well as offering the majority of the South Park cast racing around in amusing carts, the game has some nifty tracks, amusing voice-overs and a selection of the craziest weapons you'll ever come across. Dodgy controls and questionable longevity soon rear their ugly heads, though.



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

Publisher: Virgin Interactive

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

6

Street Fighter Alpha 3 is, well, Street Fighter Alpha 3. It holds very little over the PlayStation version, aside from small graphical tweaks and a bundle of extra game modes. On the plus side there are hundreds of moves, but some are a little awkward to pull off. If you're a big fan of the genre and 2D doesn't bother you this will certainly keep you happy. Otherwise, leave well alone.



STREET FIGHTER DOUBLE IMPACT

Publisher: Capcom

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 7

7

If 2D fighting is your bag, there's no doubt that Capcom's latest scrapper is the cream of the crop. The only original characters left are Ryu and Ken (and a secret appearance by Gouki – surprise, surprise!). The only truly weak point of Street Fighter III is the lack of a serious long term challenge. World Tour Mode is sorely missed here, leaving nothing much more than Arcade and Versus modes. Great for Street Fighter fanatics, but there's just not enough for more casual players.



SPEED DEVILS

Publisher: Ubi Soft

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 2

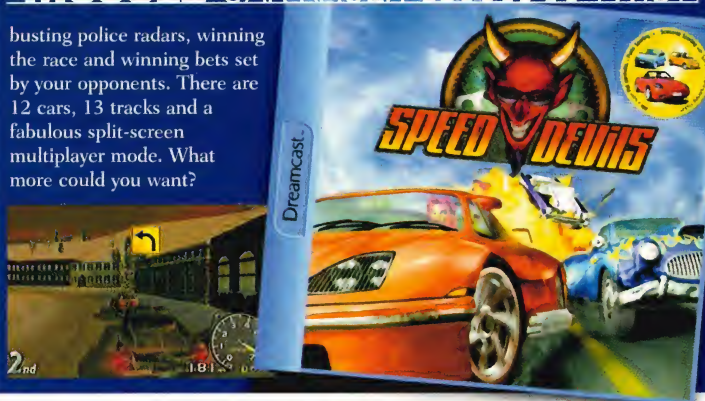
9

Speed Devils is an American muscle-car racer with a twist. Your base in Championship Mode is the garage, from which you can purchase and upgrade up to three cars at a time. To progress through the game you'll need some cash, which can be earned in several ways, including spending the most time in the lead,



SPEED DEVILS IS AN AMERICAN MUSCLE-CAR RACER WITH A TWIST

busting police radars, winning the race and winning bets set by your opponents. There are 12 cars, 13 tracks and a fabulous split-screen multiplayer mode. What more could you want?



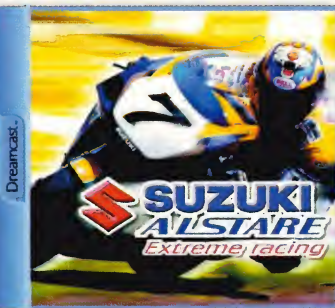
SUZUKI ALSTARE

Publisher: Ubi Soft

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

8

Speed Demon developers Criterion had one main objective here: to make the fastest, smoothest racing game around. They've recreated the Suzuki Alstare team along with six GSXRs, from the standard 600 to the insane superbike 750. The game manages to blend top-drawer arcade action with a very realistic edge drawn from Suzuki's considerable input. The helmets and bikes are modelled from the real things, the tracks are entirely fanciful. Handling is over-simplified, but the speed is totally pure.



SWORD OF THE BERSERK

Publisher: Eidos

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 9

4

Enter some gory 3D sword-swinging action. It's not too tough (the first encounter is a trainer), but the fight whets your appetite for what's to come.

But what a let-down. Sword of the Berserk should've been a cool game, but it's so lazily designed you'll probably give up out of sheer boredom long before you complete it. It's too flat, too samey and too bloody boring. You can't fault it technically, but its level design doesn't match its programming standards. Best leave this one on the shelf.



TECH ROMANCER

Publisher Virgin

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 9

5

Tech Romancer is easy to pick up and play; nothing too complex here, just bash those buttons and get on with it. It looks like a traditional fighting game, with the same colourful graphics and special effects and good finishing moves too – shame you're the one being finished. The decent selection of combatants gives you the chance to be beaten in a number of various guises.

Tech Romancer certainly looks the business and will be instantly familiar to fans of the genre. Therein lies the problem: there is nothing here that you have not seen before, or seen better.



THE NOMAD SOUL

Publisher Eidos Interactive

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 8

8



This is clearly the future of adventure gaming. Well, for starters it's got a cool soundtrack which is written and sung by David Bowie – he even appears in the game. Basically, you're a law enforcement officer who's had to possess another bloke's body so he can investigate his partner's death. Nomad Soul offers a well-defined challenge and a deep insight into a dark and futuristic world, filled with utilitarian technology and a functioning virtual community. The puzzles work logically through this well balanced adventure and the graphics are beautifully cinematic – this is a must for fans of the genre.



TEE OFF

Publisher Acclaim

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5

8

What a cool game. Whether you've just got back from the pub or you just want a quick round, this title

THIS TITLE IS SATISFYINGLY TASTY ENOUGH FOR YOUR GAMING PALETTE

is satisfyingly tasty enough for your gaming palette. It's very cartoon-style (not dissimilar to Everybody's Golf on the PlayStation) and the intro sequence screams Japanese from

all crevices. It has loadsa game modes, nice-looking characters and if the backgrounds were a little less basic it would almost be worth a nine out of ten.

Four player is almost too competitive, so be careful not to lose your closest friends. Someone's going to have to go a long way to better this golf game.



TIME STALKERS

Publisher Sega

Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 11

3

When will we get a decent RPG on the Dreamcast? This one's as dull as they come. The battle scenes bore, the randomly-generated dungeons are devoid of life and the text is verbose to the point of being turgid. Publishers take note - random dungeon geomorphs don't make the game play differently every time, they make it play the same all the time. So there.

THIS ONE'S AS DULL AS THEY COME



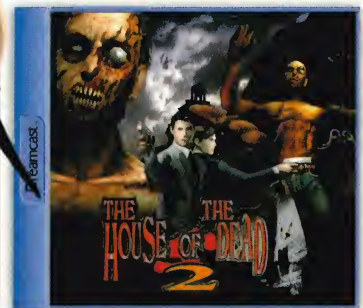
THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

Publisher Sega

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1

8

Sega's classic arcade shooter has been brilliantly converted to the Dreamcast. There are no discernible graphical differences and all the gory violence remains. You must take out the monsters and look after the innocent people to find the quickest route to the evil inventor, Goldman. Enemies range from face-sucking frogs to axe wielding zombies. It's annoying that you have to start the game from the beginning every time you lose, but it's still the sharpest shooter around.



TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE

Publisher Crave Entertainment

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3

6

Pick one of 24 cars and race along Tokyo's streets at night. Sounds great, and for a while it is, but as you make your way through 134 different opponents, the action all becomes a bit samey. The courses are well designed, but when compared to Speed Devils there just isn't as much variety. Winning and losing is determined by a time-lag system: fall too far behind and you've lost and vice-versa. Graphically flawless but lacking any real depth.



TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

Publisher: Eidos Interactive
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 7

10

The long and short of it is that Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is a classic of our time and a game that is so involving that days can turn to nights and back again before you realise you've missed an entire night's kip. Tomb Raider: TLR offers Dreamcast fans the highest quality production values, the best presentation and greatest gameplay anyone could hope for. If you've ever had doubts in the Dreamcast's abilities, they sure as hell should be history by now!

TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION IS A CLASSIC OF OUR TIME

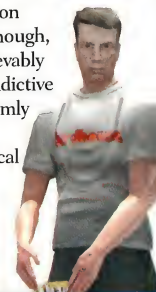


TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

Publisher: Crave
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 12

9

Tony Hawk's Skateboarding positively steam-rolled the PlayStation market over a year ago. The Dreamcast version gave Tony a complete graphical overhaul, smoothing off those jagged PSX edges and taking the rendering into true next-generation territory. Thankfully, though, the fast-paced, unbelievably intricate and highly addictive gameplay remained firmly intact. With this in mind, and that graphical overhaul, the Dreamcast now has the definitive version of this superb game.



TOY COMMANDER

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 2

9

Toy Commander surely rules the realm of original gaming concepts. You must lead your toys through increasingly tricky tasks to prove you're still the boss. And toys being toys, normal rules don't apply: you can survive massive falls and collisions and even drive up the walls. In gameplay terms there's a bit of everything, from frantic Mario Karting through to Tomb Raideresque progressive platforming and exploration. A splendid compound of everything you love about games.



TRICK STYLE

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 2

9

With their stunning Dreamcast debut, Criterion have lifted snowboarding to a new level. There are nine cyberpunks to control, each with their own stats on speed, strength, power, and skill. Five boards are available from the start and more can be earned by beating the bosses. There are loads of excellent courses spread over several different countries including the UK, USA and Japan. Graphically it's right up there with Sonic and a comprehensive two-player mode is the icing on the cake.



UEFA STRIKER

Publisher: Infogrames
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 2

8

With Expendable and Le Mans already under their belt, Infogrames have marched proudly (if a little late) onto the pitch. In pure gameplay terms it can't better ISS Pro, and you might find the controls slightly awkward at first, but given a chance, Striker does have its moments. Some areas of play such as shooting have been made easier and the game flows well. But let's not sell it short. It's a great looking game that offers a quite deep yet still highly enjoyable sporting experience.



VIGILANTE 8: SECOND OFFENSE

Publisher: Activision
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5

6

It's just a whole lotta gun blasting, truck chasing drivél. No, that's unfair, it's really not that bad but it doesn't come close to the original effort found on the PlayStation. The best feature by far is the multiplayer, where up to four of you can slog it out – it's stress relief if nothing else. However, as Simon so rightly said, 'It lacks soul'. Graphics are good, there are lots of characters to choose from and a whole host of weapons for the taking, but it just ain't got what it takes to make the Dreamcast grade – sorry!



VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1

7

Perhaps the weakest of Sega's flagship games, Virtua Fighter 3tb seemed to suffer somewhat from hurried development and testing. All the usual fighters are present, along with a decent gathering of fresh characters, but graphically the title already looks dated. The lack of twin shoulder buttons on Sega's pad also causes problems. Even though it was a launch title, beat-'em-ups have since progressed leaps and bounds. Basically Virtua's generally a solid title, but it's dramatically dwarfed by the likes of Soul Calibur.



VIRTUA STRIKER 2: VERSION 2000.1

Publisher Sega

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 5

4

Virtua Striker has always been welcomed with open arms in the arcades and with the Dreamcast around it's an easy cash in to make by releasing this title. But give us UEFA Striker or Worldwide Soccer any day, we say, as although this is a big, flash example of what the DC can do there simply isn't a playable game attached. It hasn't got a very pick-up-and-play philosophy, you just take thrashing after thrashing – learning curve? What learning curve? Looks good. Plays bad.



WILD METAL

Publisher Take 2 Interactive

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 6

8

Although not really challenging Sonic or Soul Calibur in the graphical stakes, Wild Metal's gameplay is right up there with the best. Combining the right amount of strategy with the perfect sprinkling of action, this game has a little of everything. Action takes place in very desolate environments and you choose from many uniquely designed battle tanks to take on the various enemies you encounter. The missions are challenging to say the least and after playing it for around...ooooh...ten minutes, you'll be hooked. It's the first real strategic title for the Dreamcast and Take 2 Interactive sure have done themselves, and us, rather proud.



WACKY RACES

Publisher Infogrames

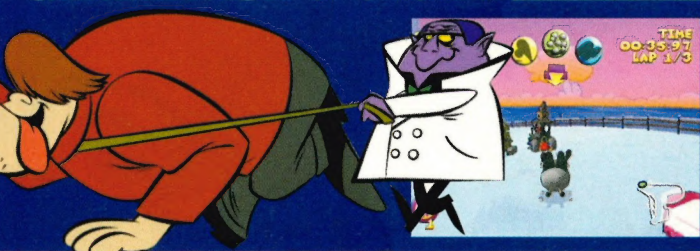
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 10

8

Wacky Races is a great karting game which is full to the brim with invention and humour. It manages to succeed in being both a lot of fun and a great challenge. With so many modes to conquer and bonuses to unlock, decent gameplay and excellent graphics, let us hope that Wacky Races will herald a new generation of original karting games. Heyyylp!



WACKY RACES WILL HERALD A NEW GENERATION OF ORIGINAL KARTING



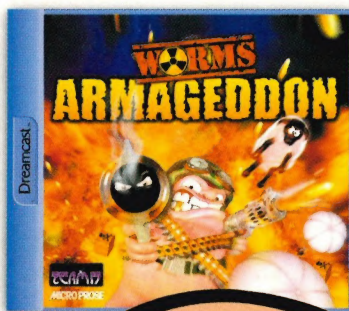
WORMS ARMAGEDDON

Publisher Hasbro

Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4

8

With more weapons, redesigned terrain and extra game modes, this classic title is best on the Dreamcast. There are now fifty five weapons, including new additions such as the skunk, which detonates with a potent pong that leaves your opponents spluttering for the rest of the game. All the usual options are there allowing you to name your own worms (Jarvis, Joe Brand, @?@*?! etc.), set a time limit on the completion of each move and, of course, choose your team's special weapon. Splendid.



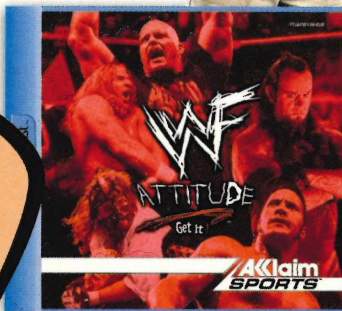
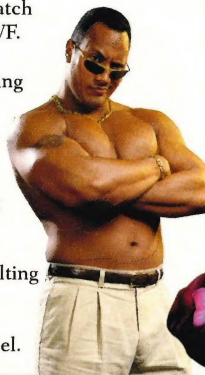
WWF ATTITUDE

Publisher Acclaim

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 4

6

This should have been a wrestling revolution, but sadly it's far from it. All the faves are there, including Stone Cold Steve Austin, Farooq, Al Snow, Val Venis, Goldust, The Rock, Triple H, Mankind Kane, The Undertaker and even the late Owen Hart. You can also recreate most of the specialist match types of the WWF. Unfortunately Acclaim's licensing deal had almost expired and there was no time to improve the game during its port from PlayStation to Dreamcast, resulting in substandard graphics and a general 32 bit feel.



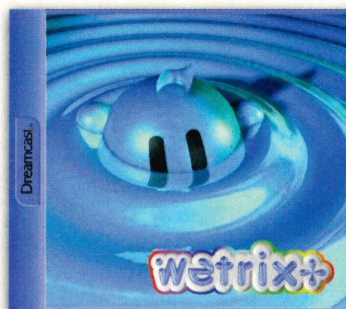
WETRIX+

Publisher Take 2 Interactive

Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 7

7

This puzzling title could be described as an underwater Tetris. All you have to do is construct lakes on a platform to catch blobs of water, to prevent your flask from spilling over. There are obstacles to get over such as bombs and earthquakes, but for a true pro this shouldn't pose a problem. Have a bash at two player and you'll be entertained for hours. This is definitely the best puzzle game for the Dreamcast yet – other than Tetris 4D, that is.



ZOMBIE REVENGE

Publisher Sega

Players: 1-3 • Reviewed: Issue 6

7

The House of the Dead 2 was no doubt one of the most popular DC launch titles and Zombie Revenge is definitely of the same ilk. 'So why did it only get a seven out of ten then?' we hear you ask. Well, it's not quite as fast and furious as THOTD 2 for starters and although there's plenty of cool weapons for your characters to get hold of (the flame thrower being our particular favourite) it's just not the same without being able to use the lightgun. The one thing that will put this at the bottom of your 'DC games to buy' list is undoubtedly the fact that the gameplay is very short lived – so why would you want to pick it up and play it again?



next month

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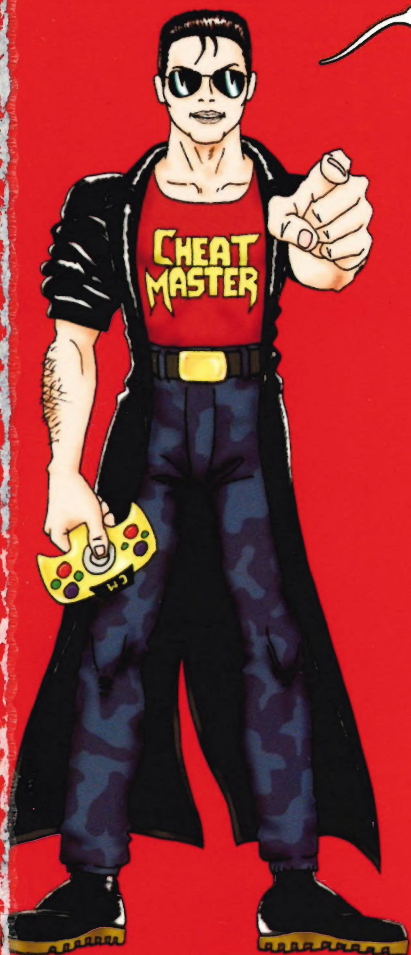


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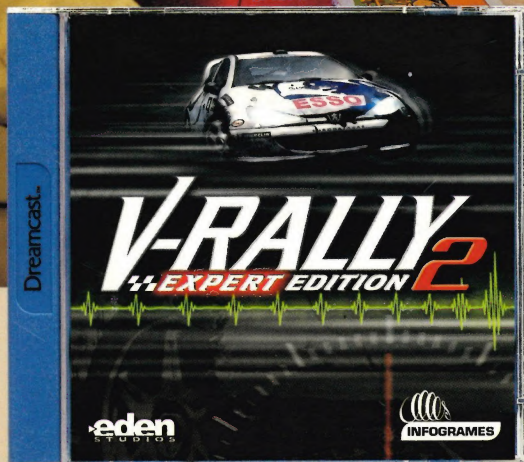
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